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ABSTRACT

These essays were written to assist teachers in the task of making Russian history intelligible to young U.S. students. In "An Approach to Russian History," Edward Keenan proposes that students need to gain a better understanding of how Russians perceive themselves and their history. In "Pre-Petrine Russia," Andrzej S. Kaminski focuses on the origins of the state, problems of the steppe, autocracy, structure of society, church, and the multinational character of the state. Marc Raeff describes developments during the 18th century in "Russia From 1689 to 1825/55." Richard Wortman discusses how the political, social, and cultural settings defined the way in which ideas were understood and used in "Russian Intellectual History to 1917: An Introduction." Abraham Ascher delineates the fundamental economic, political, and social changes that took place in "Revolutionary Russia, 1861-1921." Robert C. Tucker's aim is to put the Soviet Union's history into a Russian perspective in the essay, "Soviet Russia under Lenin and Stalin: 1921-1953." Vojtech Mastny discusses "The Soviet Union since 1953." The scholars also include bibliographic essays to help teachers locate materials that are usable in teaching Russian history. An eight-page index is provided. (SM)

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STUDYING RUSSIAN & SOVIET HISTORY

Abraham Ascher, Editor

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FOREWORD

As the co-director of three summer institutes sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, I have witnessed firsthand the great impact these institutes have on participants; for many teachers, the institutes are one of the best professional experiences of their lives. But the institutes are small in number and typically reach only a few practitioners each year. I have long believed that one way of widening the circle of teachers affected by the institutes is through publication of materials prepared for and during the institutes—both by scholars and by teachers.

The SSEC's first effort in this area was publication of two volumes of teaching activities developed by participants in our own summer institutes on the early national period of U.S. history. I am delighted that we are now able to extend our efforts by publishing this collection of materials developed by scholars for a series of conferences on Russian and Soviet history. I am particularly pleased that the volume addresses an area of high interest to world history teachers, but one in which few have extensive training.

The task facing world history teachers is not an enviable one. They not only must be knowledgeable about events across the sweep of history, but also must be skilled in helping young people bring meaning to this vast array of material. If this publication can inform and facilitate their work, it has achieved an important objective.

James R. Giese, Executive Director
Social Science Education Consortium

PREFACE

The origins of this book can be traced to a conversation I had early in the fall of 1983 with Dr. Richard Ekman, then Director of the Division of Education Programs at the National Endowment for the Humanities. We were discussing the various reports on the decline of the teaching and study of the humanities in our secondary schools. We were especially distressed to note that in many schools history was no longer taught as a separate subject. Furthermore, in other schools the emphasis was on broad concepts, methodological questions, and current events rather than on the evolution of human societies. As a consequence, many high school graduates have only the vaguest notion of major developments in the past that have decisively shaped our contemporary world.

It seemed to us that although there were several reasons for this state of affairs, two of the more important were the inadequate training of teachers and the lack of opportunity for teachers to take part in programs of intellectual renewal. We decided to consider ways to help restore the study of history in secondary schools. I promised to survey the situation in my own field, Russian and Soviet history, and to make some recommendations.

I discovered that slightly over 50 percent of our high schools still offer courses in world history and that many other schools offer social studies courses in which some attention is paid to modern Russia and the Soviet Union. It also became evident, however, that these subjects are too frequently taught by members of social studies departments whose training in the discipline of history is exceedingly modest. In several states, among them New York, Indiana, Iowa, Oklahoma, and Oregon, virtually no training in history was demanded as a qualification for a teaching position in social studies at the secondary school level. In about one-third of the states, prospective teachers of history were expected to have taken four to six three-hour history courses in college. Fewer than one-sixth of the states required a minimum of seven three-credit courses in history.

I also discovered that textbooks in world history tend to be brief and superficial in their coverage of Russia. Generally, the best that one can hope for is an accurate account of events, without any attempt to analyze trends or to offer the reader an understanding of the nature of Russian and Soviet societies. One of the better books in this genre devotes three pages to the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917, one of the most critical events of the 20th century. The years from 1924 to the late 1930s, when the Soviet Union underwent major social and political transformations, are covered in about five pages. In another widely used textbook in world history, developments in Russia from the 16th century to 1914 are dealt with in 13 pages.

Such brevity may be inevitable in textbooks and might not be troublesome if teachers could be counted upon to add depth to the discussion of significant events in the classroom. But teachers cannot be expected to have read widely in all areas of a field as vast as world history. Very few teachers have ever taken a course in Russian and Soviet history. Consequently, even if teachers have learned the basic facts about the history of Russia, they rarely have a sophisticated understanding of the traditions and institutions of that country. No wonder that classroom discussions of such critical and exciting events as the Revolution of 1917 and the evolution of Soviet society often strike students as dry and uninteresting. Only a teacher who has studied the history of Russia in some depth and is familiar with the major historiographical controversies surrounding the revolution and subsequent Soviet history can convey to students the drama and significance of that country's past.

After further extensive discussions with Dr. Ekman, I developed a project for high school teachers that we both recognized would be a bit risky. We would invite carefully selected teachers to three-day conferences at which established scholars would conduct intensive seminars on six major areas of Russian and Soviet history. We knew, of course, that such a conference would not transform teachers into experts in Russian history, but we believed that we could achieve several goals. For one thing, we hoped to make them aware of the need to devote more attention to the rigorous study of history. More specifically, we wanted to impart to teachers at least a general sense of the state of scholarship on a very important area of the world and to familiarize them with the most crucial trends in Russian and Soviet history. An essential premise underlying our enterprise was the importance of analyzing trends in Russia within the larger context of Western and world history. Teachers, we realized, teach very broad courses; it is therefore vital for them to understand different traditions and to be able to integrate historical material on countries such as Russia into the standard high school offerings.

If teachers are to raise interesting and thoughtful questions about a history as complex as that of Russia, they must also have a solid grounding in chronology and facts. Consequently, another aim of the project was to direct participants to secondary works and primary sources, to which they might turn for further information and which they might wish to assign to their students as supplementary reading.

Each of the teachers participating in the conference was sent a package containing an essay on each of the six periods, written especially for the conference by the seminar leaders. The essays discussed the major themes that would be taken up in the seminars and surveyed the most important historical works on those themes. The teachers were also expected to do some assigned readings on every period.

Professor Edward L. Keenan of Harvard University presented a general approach to Russian history, which set the stage for the discussions of more specific issues. The six scholars who conducted the seminars were available throughout the three-day conference for meetings with small groups of teachers who might pose specific questions or wish to pursue one particular subject at greater length. At these meetings participants also discussed the most effective ways to present the material covered in the seminars to high school students.

The schedule of activities was extraordinarily demanding. For three days, teachers who were accustomed to occupying positions of authority in discussions of academic subjects were themselves once again "students" – for seven to eight hours a day. We were concerned as to whether they might be uncomfortable in their roles, whether they would consider the lectures too scholarly, or would dismiss as unrealistic our effort to cover the entire sweep of Russian history in three days. Much to our delight, the teachers were enthusiastic participants in the seminars, and their interest in the discussions never flagged. Virtually all of them indicated that they had gained a deeper understanding of Russian and Soviet history and that their teaching of the subject would be greatly enhanced. Not only did they raise interesting questions during the seminars, they also made a point of seeking out seminar leaders during lunch and dinner to continue the discussions of substantive issues. It was the teachers who urged us to publish the talks as a book that would be made available at low cost to themselves and to teachers who could not attend the conference.

I should like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of these conferences. Dr. Ekman gave us excellent advice, without which the project could not have been brought to fruition. His staff in the Division of Education Programs – in particular Mr. John Hale – gave us all the support we could hope for. The National Endowment for the Humanities provided the financial support that enabled us to bring 180 teachers to conference sites in New York, New Orleans, and Chicago. Much of the administrative work was ably handled by my assistant, Mr. Robert Kostrzewa, a doctoral student in history at the Graduate School of the City University of New York. Mr. Kostrzewa also prepared the index for this volume.

Finally, I want to thank the six scholars who took time off from their busy schedules to take part in a project about which they, too, had some initial reservations. These scholars were:

Andrzej Kaminski, Professor of History
Georgetown University

Edward L. Keenan, Professor of History
Harvard University

Vojtech Mastny, Professor of International Relations
Boston University

Marc Raeff, Professor of History
Columbia University

Robert Tucker, Professor Emeritus of Politics
Columbia University

Richard Wortman, Professor of History
Princeton University

These six scholars all acknowledged the worthiness of the project, but they wondered – as I did – whether much could be accomplished in a three-day conference. At the end of each conference, we were all pleasantly surprised by the excitement and enthusiasm of the participants. It was the recognition that the seminars had been intellectually stimulating and effective beyond all expectation that encouraged us to prepare the seminar presentations for publication. We hope that the book will prove to be helpful to secondary school teachers of history who did not themselves attend any of the seminars and that our endeavor will lead to further cooperation between university scholars and high school teachers.

Abraham Ascher
Graduate School, City University of New York

AN APPROACH TO RUSSIAN HISTORY

by Edward Keenan

The primary goal of the present collaboration is to assist teachers in the daunting task of making Russian history – and today's Russia – intelligible to young Americans in the context of what they know, and must learn, about their own and other, more familiar, societies. As my own contribution to that common enterprise, and as a form of introduction to the excellent essays of my colleagues, I have undertaken to set forth below a few prosaic but often-overlooked notions concerning the difficulties that Americans typically encounter in their attempts to make sense of how Russians behave and of how Russians think about themselves – in particular, about their history.

The nature of our undertaking – which can aspire to be no more than the beginning of a long intellectual journey of discovery – leads one to a point of departure that scholars rarely acknowledge openly: that rich source of authoritative wisdom and attractive hypotheses, autobiography. What, I have asked myself, did I know about humans and society when I began the study of Russia? What would I have liked to have had presented to me in my first introduction to the subject? What would have been most accessible, most interesting, most useful in what has turned out to be a lifetime of engagement with the subject?

Readers will perhaps be relieved to learn that I find my recollections about my early acquaintance with Russian history dim and untrustworthy. Nor can I really identify any formative experience or circumstance that might have drawn me to this business in the first place. My home town, which consisted of 1144 souls in the year (1940) in which I entered kindergarten, and where I stayed in the same school for 13 years, was not the place to learn very much about distant lands and exotic cultures, although I do remember a good unit on the history of Erie County. My first remembered contact with Russian history, then, took place in Harvard College, in the course that I now teach, which was then an even more conventional introductory undergraduate course than it is now, and about which I think little can usefully be said for our present purpose.

Having cast my mind back over the decades and found what appeared to be a *tabula rasa*, I was moved to reject that finding, and to try to remember what in fact had occupied that seemingly blank space. For I had been formed in a very typical American small town, and I had had some devoted and thoughtful teachers, and I suspected that many of the predispositions with which I did eventually approach Russian history were not unlike those being formed in American classrooms today, despite the changes in our lives in the intervening decades. I think I may have been typical of young Americans in that somewhere I acquired the generally optimistic expectations about humans and the orderly society that we seem to have retained – longer than other inhabitants of our planet – from the Enlightenment century in which our republic was formed. And like many others, I had some wise teachers, who transmitted echoes of early 20th-century social thought, imparted a belief in the methods of the social and behavioral sciences, and stimulated interest and confidence in the search for patterns in human culture. Although ours was a "churchy" town, a kind of relaxed secularism extended right up to the doors of the churches (and into some of them), and metaphysics and transcendent abstraction were wisely restricted to those antemeridianal Sunday hours when spiritous drink was not for sale. Moreover, we all learned that, behind the doors of all of those churches but one, people whom we knew as otherwise perfectly rational said and did some pretty strange things.

These banal reminiscences, in short, lead me to conclude that, by the fateful day of my first encounter with the more-or-less systematic study of Russian culture, I had been equipped with some rather typical American notions, very much like those that I suspect to be present, *mutatis mutandis*, even today in young people: namely, with the innate – or learned – conviction that humans are natively benign to themselves and to others; that humans make sense; that society in its natural condition is stable and orderly; that one can design methods and terms with which to demonstrate and to express its regularities; that secular and "rational" ideas are the only thought-systems one can decently urge upon others; and that even the great variety of individuals, and the diversity of human ideas, do not speak against these general propositions of social order and human rationality.

It is not difficult to imagine the magnitude of the intellectual handicap that was imposed by my typically American embrace of these happy convictions.

Unless I am quite wrong about my young compatriots, however, they approach Russian history with something like the same cultural baggage. They have no little consternation ahead, as I did, not least because Russians themselves typically (please note that "typically"; it will recur) do not believe *any* of these comforting generalizations nearly as firmly as we do, because the record of

Russia's history seems so often to provide justification for their view, and because the culture of Russian history, as practiced by both Russians and Americans, has a predilection for the contemplation of dysfunction, disorder, and morbidity (in which the historical record is decidedly rich), an obsession with what Russians have *said* about themselves – in and out of church – rather than what they have done, and an unarticulated conviction that history is somehow to blame for the lamentable condition in which Russians so often seem to find themselves.

I put it to you, however, that the notions I have characterized above as "American" – naive and Pollyannish as they can be in their most extreme and unexamined form – can in fact be helpful in dealing with Russia's history. Moreover, if indeed our students have inherited these "American" notions, seeing that they do not abandon them in the face of the traditional pathologies of Russian historical thinking is as much a part of our task as is imparting knowledge of any particular facts or analytical devices. We can bring students to the realization that Russian history makes sense – in their own terms: a sobering sense, but sense nonetheless.

That Russian history make sense is extraordinarily important to Americans. Proceeding from our hopeful notion that humans make sense and our belief that nations are generally similar, students soon encounter arresting differences between themselves and Russians: being acculturated to look to formative influences – childhood experiences, social circumstances, historical national experience – for both an explanation of the origins of the differences and a source of understanding of their essence, they turn to Russia's history.

The problem lies in the fact that much of Russian history – the teaching and writing of Russian history – doesn't make sense. At least, it is difficult for our students to make sense of it as it is presented. The fault, I hasten to add, is not entirely that of those of us who teach it. The problem is complex, and its roots are deep – in Russia's history and in the history of Russia's history.

Much could be said, even to younger people, about various kinds and theories of history, about the uses and abuses of history, and the like. For our present purposes, however, I need only mention a few very general problems in the Russian historiographic tradition and in Western traditions of dealing with Russian history. Some of these will be familiar and, I fear, obvious; others will perhaps be unexpected. They should be mentioned together, the obvious and the arcane, the Russian and the Western, because they interact and feed upon one another.

It should first be mentioned that history – a sense of history, of historicity, of their own history – appears to be more important, somehow, to Russians than it is to many of their European cousins, and certainly to us. There are many reasons for this importance of historical self-image to the Russian sense of identity, and we can hardly mention them all. Some part of Russians' sensitivity to historical modes of thought derives, certainly, from the fact that "history," by which here I mean events themselves, seems to have played a rather large number of bad tricks on the Russians (as it did on the similarly history-conscious ancient Hebrews) – or so Russians believe.

A second factor that has somehow sensitized Russians to historical modes of explanation and self-explanation may be the fact that the actor who is so important in traditional histories – the national leader, the monarch – seems so often, through some mysteriously titanic force of will, to have wrenched Russia's history out of shape. This is how Russians think about Ivan the Terrible; about Peter the Great, the first modern national leader; and about Stalin, the last traditional leader of an industrialized state.

A third, little-noted factor (and one about which I should say I have somewhat idiosyncratic views) is that at the dawn of modern times and the beginning of their continuous national development, Russians – by which I mean Muscovites of roughly the 16th century – were a new nation, without much sense of any history, including their own. They were challenged, by Reformation Europe, to come up with one. This they eventually did well enough – no less well than many of their European neighbors and rather better than, say, the Irish – but it was some time before they began to believe it was really their own.

Now this last point really combines two separate matters: (1) the arguable but by no means generally-accepted notion that Muscovites – "real" Russians, sometimes infelicitously called "Great Russians" – were in significant ways a new nation in Renaissance times, and (2) the indisputable fact, as I see it, that the challenge of confrontation with a very history-conscious Europe was the generative moment of specifically Muscovite historical consciousness and laid upon it an ineradicable birthmark.

From the beginning it was Europeans who brought modern scholarly history to the Russians: first the Poles by translating late Renaissance compilations and humanistic world histories, later the French, English, and Germans. It was Europeans – here primarily itinerant English and Dutch in the 16th, 17th, and early 18th centuries – who brought and generated vernacular historical stereotypes and historical questions about the Russians themselves.

Studying the history of these stereotypes and questions is entertaining and even useful, as is speculating upon how things might have been different for Russians had their contact with Westerners proceeded in some other fashion. Let me give two examples of such stereotypes – very familiar ones: Russia as the land of ice and snow and Russia as a somehow "oriental" state.

Among the earliest Western travelers were Italians, who from early times, particularly in the 15th century, conducted a very lucrative trade in the Black Sea area, including occasional sorties to Moscow. (Indeed Italians built the most familiar parts of the Kremlin; if properly restored, it would look very much like a fortified Northern Italian town.) The surviving accounts of these Italian visitors are striking in that these two stereotypes are hardly mentioned. To be sure, the Italians felt the cold in Moscow. However, since they began their journey late in summer in the Crimea, moved through the lush autumnal Ukrainian steppe to Moscow, and on the return trip traveled through the dramatic prairie spring, they were not overly impressed with the ice and snow: Moscow had a cold winter, rather like the Tyrol.

Nor did the Italian visitors conceive of Muscovites as "oriental," since, having dealt during centuries in the Levant trade with Mamlukes, Tatars, Turks, and Persians, they immediately perceived the differences between Muscovites and their eastern neighbors. They were not particularly impressed by any similarities.

As it happened, however, the accounts of these well-informed and sober Italians did not shape Europeans' images of Muscovy and – ultimately – Russians' conceptions of themselves. For it was later travelers from a different quarter – the English and Dutch – whose 16th-century accounts, borne upon the wave of wide use of European vernaculars and the printing press, most deeply impressed the European imagination and particularly that of English-speakers like ourselves. As it happened, these English and Dutch voyagers came to Russia by the most northerly of all possible routes – around the North Cape in Norway, by sea into the region of Murmansk – and then in winter, when the traveling was best along frozen rivers, south to Moscow. Ice and cold they certainly encountered; neither they nor the rest of Europe ever forgot it.

Moreover, these travelers came to Moscow at a time – the late 16th and 17th centuries – when the Muscovite court was avidly emulating the styles of the great Persian court of Saffavid Isfahan, with which it had active trade relations. Muscovites *looked* Persian, just as in Peter's time they looked French or Dutch. These early visitors quite naturally assumed that the man makes the clothes, when such was not the case.

Now I am not trying to say that Russia is not cold, or that her position at the fringe of the great Central Asian culture zone had no effect upon her cultural development. What I am saying is that our perceptions of Muscovy, which derive from these times, have their history. The historical questions that we ask of Russians, and that Russians ask of themselves, have their history too, much of which derives from this same period. Principal among these questions – the question of questions – is that of Russia and Europe, or, as Henry Higgins would put it, "Why can't a Russian be more like...me?" Europeans provided answers, too – characteristically European and post-Reformation answers: Russians are not like us because they are Orthodox and not Protestant or Catholic; because they have had no Renaissance and no Reformation; because they are, well,...oriental. The classic formulation was crafted, it seems, in the witty French 18th-century aphorism: "Scratch a Russian, and you will find a Tartar."

Now it matters little that, as I would be willing to argue, none of these generalizations about Muscovy can be accepted without important qualifications; what matters for our present purposes is that Russians, imitating Europeans in this as in so many other things, accepted these questions and even many of these answers. They imitated European historical reasoning for the same reason that they imitated wigs and portrait painting and ballet: because their own was, or seemed to them to be, somehow deficient. In particular they acquired, and developed, an obsession with the juxtaposition of native and foreign culture that has distorted their perception of both.

Of course they resisted, too – just as they resisted and eventually threw off many foreign fashions. (My favorite example of this resistance is the riposte to the quip about scratching a Russian: "Scratch a Frenchman and you will find...nothing.")

Russians developed, primarily in the 19th century, more complex forms of rejection of the European treatment of history, some of which are very much with us today and can be as pernicious and unhelpful as our own stereotypes. Like other nations and groups in comparable circumstances, they developed the elusive and unhelpful notion of "soul" – the "Russian soul," the qualities of which could not be fully understood by foreigners and whose mysteries are invoked to explain all manner of historical and cultural differences between Russians and other, presumably soulless, folk. Indeed, they went so far as to proclaim, in the words of one poet, that "Russia is not to be understood by the mind," a phrase at least one of whose meanings is that Russia and its history cannot be studied by the positivistic, secular, "scientific" methods of Western historiography. This is of course nonsense that even Russian historians, in their more sober moments, reject.

These, then, are some of the impediments that confront us as we move with our students from our native conviction that Russians, like the rest of us, make sense, toward some more articulated understanding of how and why they make sense: the obsession with historiosophic explanations; the preoccupation with Europe and with the Henry Higgins question; historical stereotypes; the lure of the suspension of reason.

But we cannot make do with negations: how are we to go about introducing young people to the historical experience of Russians so as to bring it close enough to the realm of their reason and familiar understandings to be accessible to their own ways of making sense of things?

We can begin, I suggest, with some definitions and methodological explanations. As I suggested above, we should define Russia as specifically that Russian, Muscovite state and society that arose in the northeast part of the East Slavic territory, rather late in the recorded history of the East Slavs and in relative isolation from the previous experience of other East Slavs. This society becomes recognizably Russian from roughly the beginning of the 16th century, much as our Anglo-American culture is recognizable to us from roughly Elizabethan times. The preceding Kievan experience is, I believe, sufficiently different in essential features as to require different modes of study and understanding. Moreover, the Kievan experience is only indirectly relevant to later Muscovite history – comparable, perhaps, to the role of the Carolingian or Norman experiences in the shaping of French and English nations. (I realize that this assertion is incompatible with the organization of this volume and I mean in no way to detract from readers' appreciation of the fine essay prepared by my colleague Professor Kaminski – but such is my view.)

Similarly – and more outrageously – I think that one can, as a practical matter, dispense with extended discussion of Russia's alleged debt to Byzantium. Such a statement cannot avoid offending some and shocking others, and I cannot defend it here. But I consider entirely defensible the proposition that a study of Byzantium and Orthodoxy is even less relevant to an understanding of Muscovy than, for example, knowledge of Classical or Early Christian Rome is to Elizabethan England. That Russians in later centuries thought their Orthodox tradition to be an important aspect of their historical identity is a different matter, and should be considered alongside the ideas that 18th-century English and Americans had about themselves as the heirs to various parts of the legacy of Rome.

I leave open the unanswerable question of the extent to which Muscovites were more or less pious than, say, the English – but in any case that is a subject in which our students, alas, may have little interest.

As a final delimitation of our undertaking, I propose that one can without detriment allocate very limited attention to the Mongol period and the so-called "Tartar influence"; it is true, of course, that some critical features of Muscovite statecraft and military arts – features far more important to Muscovy's great political success than was Orthodoxy – seem to have been borrowed from the equally impressive Tatar practices. As in the case of the Byzantine cultural "package," however, these forms and practices were appropriated for specific and limited purposes by a tiny and hereditary professional elite – bureaucrats and warriors in this case – and had little influence upon the culture of the great mass of Russians.

What we should concentrate upon, I believe, are the fundamental formative experiences of this modern Muscovite/Russian nation, its most *sui generis* native social structures, and the characteristic patterns of mind that were shaped by these experiences and structures. We should treat these distinctive features comparatively, with generous help from modern social-science and behavior-science methodology, which has become so important to historians in the past few decades but has not yet enjoyed the popularity among historians of Russia that it merits.

What are these fundamental formative experiences, these *sui generis* native social structures, these characteristic patterns of mind? Here I shall indulge in a few speculations of the type that my teacher, Roman Jakobson, used to call "working hypotheses," a term he applied to notions about which he had already made up his mind and was to spend the rest of his life defending.

First and foremost – utterly essential in my view – among the formative experiences is the millennial experience of Russians in the cultural patterns of communal subsistence agriculture. This environment, in my view, is the womb of Russian culture, and it was the context of Russian life for nine-tenths of all Russians until this century. We must impress upon students the importance of the almost indelible impressions left by this experience and the virtues of considering the ways in which it shaped almost all spheres of Russian life. We must get them to visualize and understand the achievement of East Slavs as they spread through the primeval northern forest, fighting the harsh conditions of a territory almost all of which lay north of the southern tip of Hudson's Bay, prospering and multiplying with a demographic dynamism that swamped the aboriginal Balts and Finns, developing and perfecting land-extensive and cultivation techniques that made colonization one of the main forces of their history.

There are problems and traps here, which I should mention precisely because I think this matter so important. First, of course, is the fact that our students barely know that milk comes from cows and certainly do not know when to turn hay. But we can be assisted by good new work, especially that of Robert Smith (*Farming in Muscovy* and *The Origins of Farming in Russia*), which I recommend to teachers, although it may be a bit dense for students.

A second problem is the tendency of such ecological approaches to slide into the ways of the 19th-century climatological explanations of history, or, for that matter, of the "ice and snow" stereotype. To avoid these, we must adopt the complex and interdisciplinary methods applied, for example, by Braudel, studying simultaneously agricultural methods, social adaptation, simple technologies, and interactions with outside forces. We must also stress the close interactions of group behavior with the inflexible demands of survival. If we can bring our students to understand the matrix of East Slavic subsistence agriculture in all of its manifestations, we shall have brought them close to seeing how Russians make sense.

The explanations that come from an understanding of these matters are sometimes striking; let me give an inconsequential, but typical, example: many of you may have read the Russian story *Konek-gorbunok*, "The Little Hump-backed Horse." Others who have traveled to Russia may have purchased the little clay horses made in some villages on a traditional model—oddly long-legged, short in the spine, and so thick in the neck as to appear hump-backed. But few know that the native—or adaptive—Russian horse *was* small and hump-backed because over centuries Russian farmers, who brought their livestock into their houses for the long cold winter and had to cut hay for an average of 120 days of snow cover, bred for smallness. They *created* that little hump-backed horse, just as French and Belgian farmers, for other reasons, created their massive draft animals.

Russian farmers created other things as well—the *sui generis* social organizations of which I have spoken. These—the household, the village commune—are better known because they persisted into the 20th century as the resilient and almost indestructible structures of peasant life, much to the consternation of improving landlords and impatient bureaucrats. One can learn a lot about these structures from books such as that of the rural sociologist Teodor Shanin, and we should encourage students to consider them thoroughly.

Most Russians, of course, do not today live in agricultural households or village communes, but most observers agree that the groups that have replaced them—the so-called collective at workplaces of all kinds and in residential communes—exercise many of the same functions, practically and psychologically. Russians seem to feel and function better, for the most part, within groups—more structured groups than we are familiar with, and groups with more significant powers over the individual—than we do.

In my own view, which I cannot elaborate here, this characteristic relationship derives from profound convictions about the nature of the individual, which in turn are the product of a millennium of subsistence agriculture in a very harsh and unforgiving environment; typically, Russians have less confidence in human nature and in its individual articulations than we do. They have learned that the individual is vulnerable and fragile—a single person simply cannot survive for many seasons in that forest. Under the stressful and demanding conditions of the long winter and short but frantic summer, the individual may fail to take care of him/herself; this failure to accomplish the necessary tasks of survival, whether through illness or selfishness or laziness or drunkenness, is dangerous not only to that individual but to the group, which depends upon the labor inputs of every member, just as it does upon every piece of hay, every stick of firewood, and every little hump-backed horse.

Russians are typically less confident than we are that individuals, left to their own devices, can avoid hurting themselves and damaging the prospects of the community. This pessimism, I believe, derives from the formative experience of subsistence agriculture but seems to have been reinforced in the turbulent events of recent generations. This pessimism is easy to demonstrate in any number of cultural patterns and social practices. One could put it another way: Russians strike the balance of good and evil in humans at a slightly more pessimistic point than do Americans; they are skeptical about taking gambles on humans' moral virtue, although they are rather more confused about how such is to be measured.

Given this lower expectation, Russians are more confident when the potentially harmful impulses of the individual are curbed by group sanctions, which, though intrusive in some circumstances, have been justified by a thousand years of survival against great odds, a thousand years of success in their conspiracy against the forces of nature – a nature that Russians see not as benign, but as hostile and dangerous, primarily because it is uncontrollable and unpredictable. With some justification, they have come to see survival itself as the result of a successful group conspiracy against that hostile environment.

Muscovites, especially in the period after roughly 1450, developed *sui generis* structures quite different from the communes, but linked to them in several important ways. Chief among these in the historical development of the country was a remarkably sophisticated political system based upon strictly regulated power-sharing among clan and patronage organizations made up of hereditary cavalrymen with the mythically powerful Grand Prince at its center, and the closely related but politically impotent bureaucracy.

Like the organizations of the village, these structures were based upon kinship and tradition, rather than, say, competition or contract or law. They were maintained by group sanctions that curbed individual initiative but buffered individuals and clans against the risks inherent in the ambitions of proud armed men. These structures performed with marvelous success for centuries, marshaling the human and natural resources of this poorly endowed and sparsely settled land with an effectiveness that repeatedly amazed observers from more fortunate lands with far more complex sociopolitical structures.

The memoirs of one such visitor to Russia (early in the 17th century), a very astute and well-informed French soldier of fortune named Jacques Margeret, have recently been published in English in a well-annotated edition. I can recommend it as a good early "Russia book," to be compared, for example, with those periodically written by returning *New York Times* Moscow correspondents. By and large, Margeret, who had the advantage of having commanded the tsar's personal bodyguard, was better informed than more recent commentators. However, since Russian politicians, then as now, were disinclined to "leak" information to nonparticipants about the rules of their games – or even names and numbers, for that matter – Margeret, like his successors, found some things quite puzzling, even bizarre. He concluded, like modern observers have, that these oddities demonstrated just how inscrutable and unnatural the Russians were.

One thing about his hosts that particularly bothered Margeret was that among Muscovite noble cavalrymen there was no dueling. We can assume – even after some correction for our stereotypes of 16th-century French noblemen – that for Margeret the total absence of dueling among a class of honor-conscious *chevaliers* seemed downright nasty. Even more sordid, for Margeret, was the fact that when foreign mercenaries, with whom Muscovy was teeming at this time, fell to dueling among themselves, they were punished under Muscovite law for murder or attempted murder – without regard, as Margeret doesn't fail to point out, for the details of who challenged whom and whose honor had been maligned. Strange practices, indeed!

What Margeret failed to understand about his hosts was that, because kinship was at the base of Muscovite politics, honor inhered not in the individual, but in his clan, and that blood spilt in anger called out for vengeance by kinsmen. Indeed, blood feuds among the great families constitute much of the historical narrative of the 15th and 16th centuries. Moreover, since that vengeance could lead to a chain reaction of vendettas, the danger that the system feared more than any other, Muscovites were taught to consider a slight or insult to personal honor insufficient cause to risk turning loose such destructive forces – and the system suppressed even the less dangerous proclivities of hotheaded foreigners.

This unique Muscovite political system worked so well, I think, because, like the political culture of the village, it was highly risk-averse and limited itself to a very few simple objectives; these can be called the organization of a successful conspiracy against the natural state of society, which participants confidently believed was chaos, and specifically the chaos of clan wars of all against all, of which Muscovy had a number sufficient to confirm this somber belief. The lengths to which Muscovite politicians – that is, the members of the traditional hereditary cavalry that was the government, just as the government was the army – would go to reduce the risk of uncontrollable conflict among themselves were truly breathtaking. They are perhaps best expressed in the staggering amount of political centralization imposed in that vast, poorly developed, and often impassable country.

Like the peasant commune, these politicians were willing to pay almost any cost for success in their conspiracy against what they took to be the dangers of catastrophe, and for the same reasons: they had an aversion to risk, a low expectation about humans and their devices, and a fear of elemental chaos. They were successful – as peasant agriculturalists were – probably because in their circumstances of extraordinarily high mortality, very minimal development of social infrastructure, and the tensions of a military society held together by notions of shame and honor, their gloomy expectations were confirmed by their experience. The devices invented by the members of the hereditary military elite to preserve their basic units—the clans—from extinction were complex (and have only recently attracted the interest of modern scholars). Among these were: a strict system assigning seniority and status, or "honor," at birth according to birth order (males only); a carefully regulated pecking order among clans, depending primarily upon marriage relationships to the Grand Princes, but including allowance for previous status; rules requiring the performance of military and ritual court duties by those whose status entitled them to do so, etc. The complicated system of calculations and sanctions required to make this system work was called "mestnichestvo"; it was officially abandoned in 1682.

These, then, as I see it, were the formative circumstances, the *sui generis* structures, and the characteristic convictions that determined what it was to be Russian in the critical first centuries of their national experience, let us say until the end of the 17th century. I believe that these features of "Russianness" have not, in their deepest foundations, changed radically in modern times. Rather, they have combined and reintegrated themselves in new forms, reaffirmed by political and social chaos and dizzying change, concentrated and perhaps purified by social mobility, homogeneity, and the democratization of society—which has, in a sense, brought masses of bearers of traditional culture to critical positions in modern society.

It is, for me, in the context of that traditional society and its attitudes that Russians—the very Russian leaders and their critics and the broad masses—make sense even today. Their attitudes about the relation of the individual and the group make sense; their—particularly intellectuals'—preoccupation with the moral weakness of the individual makes sense; their striking risk-aversion and the steadfast resistance to reform—even to revolution—make sense; their intellectuals' fear of the elemental power of the masses makes sense; their authentic distrust of the unpredictable and risk-laden workings of electoral democracy makes sense; their fear of the chaos-inducing power of the word makes sense.

All of these traits, seen mostly in contrast to other industrial societies, make sense, I suggest, in the light of their unique historical experience—as do, as I suggested at the beginning of my remarks, their attitudes toward history itself, toward the Europe that made them think of themselves in historical terms, and towards us.

I'd like to close with a bit of close reading that might suggest how we can, if we put ourselves in mind of some of these Russian preoccupations and contours of culture, gain a better understanding of how Russians imagine themselves and how they struggle with their history.

The following paragraphs are taken from the recent English translation of Vassily Aksyonov's *Ozhog* (the Burn), a most entertaining novel that is particularly rich in its evocation of recent social and intellectual history.

> In Europe there are frivolous democracies with warm climates, where an intellectual spends his life flitting from dentist's drill to the wheel of a Citroen, from a computer to an espresso bar, from the conductor's podium to a woman's bed, and where literature is something almost as refined, witty, and useful as a silver dish of oysters laid out on brown seaweed and garnished with cracked ice.
>
> Russia, with its six-month winter, its tsarism, Marxism, and Stalinism, is not like that. What we like is some heavy masochistic problem, which we can prod with a tired, exhausted, not very clean but very honest finger. That is what we need, and it is not our fault.

Aksyonov begins with a wonderfully characteristic sentence, in which he is able—perhaps unwittingly—to express not only both the Russian intellectuals' obsession with an idealized Europe and their cautious distrust of electoral politics, but also their conviction that somehow Europe had good luck—a warm climate—but that Russia, with its cold climate is somehow morally superior: "In Europe there are frivolous democracies with warm climates,..."

There follows a virtuoso inventory of images associated with the fantasies Russian intellectuals have of their European and American counterparts—items that Russian intellectuals of Aksyonov's generation have never possessed or, what is more poignant, have possessed in some deficient, debased, or unsatisfying form: the dentist's drill, the Citroen, the computer, the espresso bar, a woman's bed, a silver dish, oysters, cracked ice... While revealing his envy of such imagined delights, Aksyonov reaffirms his sense of moral superiority in his sarcastic characterization of European literature: "Where literature is something almost as refined, witty, and useful as a silver dish of oysters."

Having thus banished and discredited his fantasies of Europe, he contrasts it with Russia: "Russia, with its six-month winter, its tsarism, Marxism, and Stalinism, is not like that." Like the long winters, tsarism, Marxism, and Stalinism are somehow bracing and good for the character—especially for those heroic enough to survive them. He follows with an image antipodal to the dish of oysters: "What we like is some heavy masochistic problem (like a pile of lukewarm kasha, one supposes), which we can prod with a tired, exhausted, not very clean but very honest finger." (He is saying, I assume, that the finger of the European intellectual is very clean, but not very honest...) Aksyonov concludes this passage with a most poignant and significant expression of the same sense of moral superiority: "That is what we need, and it is not our fault." Here, at once, he is answering both Henry Higgins' question (why can't a Russian be more like me? Russians somehow are not supposed to be like Europeans) and the Russian's favorite historical question (Why? Who is to blame? Not us, he says).

He doesn't believe it, however, because of the social guilt that Russian intellectuals, since very early modern times, have felt about their dual relationship to Europe and the mass of uneducated Russians, a guilt that successive governments have, for different reasons, reinforced: "Not our fault? Really? But who let the genie out of the bottle, who cut themselves off from the people, who let the Tatars into the city, invited the Varangians to come and rule over them, licked the boots of Europe, isolated themselves from Europe, struggled madly against the government, submitted obediently to dim-witted dictators? We did all that—we, the Russian intelligentsia."

It matters little that most of this is preposterously untrue and unhistorical. What matters is the moral statement: we, the hardy, heroic, frostbitten, honest Russian intellectuals are, despite our moral virtue, responsible for our own predicament; the louse-ridden bed we are sleeping in we made ourselves.

One should not, of course, dwell upon these few sentences, characteristic and evocative as they may be, but they can serve as emblematic and rather memorable evidence of certain deep cultural structures that shape the world view not only of so gifted and sophisticated a man, but of millions of Russians. It is these deep structures that I have tried to draw to your attention: a profound sense of the hostile role of nature; a morbid tendency—acquired from Europeans themselves—to compare themselves to an imagined Europe; a related and equally irrational notion of "soul," an ineffable moral quality that makes Russians somehow morally superior to other Europeans, despite their acknowledged iniquity; the abiding awareness that history, like the elemental forces of nature and society, is somehow an enemy.

Clearly, as one remembers the notions about humans and social life that typical young Americans might be expected to bring to the study of Russia, these deep structures of Russian history and self-awareness seem to present almost insuperable barriers to understanding. Yet, as I have argued, Russians do make sense, and we can, with patience and imagination, convince young people of this fact. At the very least, we must declare that, if we are true to our own convictions and the methods of modern social and behavioral science, we can make Russians appear to make as much sense as does American history, or as life itself. This we must believe, or we are not Americans and post-industrial children of the Enlightenment.

PART 1

ESSAYS ON THEMES IN RUSSIAN AND SOVIET HISTORY

PRE-PETRINE RUSSIA

by Andrzej S. Kaminski

With some justice it may be said that only in the 18th century did Russia become an integral part of Europe, as a result of the reforms of Peter the Great and the increasing involvement of Russia in the European state system. The country that emerged, as it were, onto the stage of European history at that time was marked by a number of peculiar features that distinguished it in whole or in part from the other European powers of its day.

It was, to begin with, a centralized autocratic state whose ruler enjoyed authority and prerogatives far exceeding even those of the rulers of absolutist France or Spain. It was, moreover, a state in which no social group or institution could claim any autonomous corporate rights: all were bound by an obligation of obedience and service to the autocrat.

Russia was also distinguished by its adherence to the Orthodox Church, whose members everywhere outside the borders of the tsar's state were subject to the rule of "unbelievers." Under Peter, the church was transformed into a virtual department of state, losing practically all of its institutional independence.

Finally, Russia was a vast empire, embracing a wide variety of languages, religions, and peoples, a feature that did not, however, present any significant obstacle to the overwhelming centralization of political authority in the hands of the autocrat. In fact, this diversity made possible the skillful exploitation of the services of members of various conquered peoples. (It is worth noting that the Soviet Union today is the only surviving representative of several once-flourishing multinational European empires, continuing to exercise control over a number of different states and nationalities with an ancient historical tradition or at least a longstanding national consciousness of their own—Georgia, Armenia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Crimea, Uzbekistan, the Tatars, etc.)

Our task here is to look back at the origins of these various elements. Specifically, we will focus on six topics: the origins of the state, the problem of the steppe, the autocracy, the structure of society, the church, and the multinational character of the state.

The Origins of the State

In many respects, the beginnings of the state in medieval Rus' did not differ significantly from the pattern observable elsewhere. As in much of medieval Europe, the state was the product of conquest and the imposition of a wide-ranging system of tribute collection, in this case by a dynasty of Scandinavian origin, the Rurikids. The Rurikids succeeded, in the 9th and 10th centuries, in uniting under their rule the lands along the trading routes of the Dnieper, Western Dvina, Volkhov, and upper Volga River basins, a region inhabited by East Slavic, Finnic, and Baltic tribes. Centered in Kiev and growing rich from trade, tribute, and booty, the principality reached its zenith under the rulers Vladimir (978–1015) and Iaroslav the Wise (1019–1054).

The Scandinavian origins of the state have been the source of a historiographic debate known as the "Normanist" controversy, revolving around the relative role of Scandinavian and Slavic elements in the birth of the Kievan Rus'. While the question on purely academic grounds would seem to merit only a certain limited degree of attention, it has in fact generated much heat, if little light, exemplifying the important role that official nationalism and "foundation myths" have played in both the Romanov empire and the Soviet Union.

The controversy dates from 1749, when a member of the Imperial Russian Academy of Sciences, Gerhard Müller, delivered a lecture to colleagues in which, on the basis of Russian chronicles and Greek and Latin sources, he argued that the Russian state had been founded, not by Slavs, but by Varangians, and that the name "Rus'" derived, not from the tribe of Roxolani known to classical sources, but from the Finnish name for the Swedes, *Ruotsi*. Müller never had a chance to finish his lecture (which was delivered in Latin), as he was interrupted, not by a fellow historian, but by the astronomer N. Popov, whose exclamation would be echoed by generations of opponents of the Normanist theory: "*Tu, clarissime auctor, nostrum gentem infama afficis*" [You, famous author, bring dishonor upon our nation]. In the ensuing din, the scholar was unable to continue; he was subsequently forbidden by the authorities to write on or even study the subject of Russian history.

At least one other controversy surrounding the foundation of this state is worthy of attention here. The political heartland, centered around Kiev, is today part of the Ukraine, not Russia (more precisely, Great Russia). It is generally the view of Ukrainian historiography, most eloquently expressed by Myhailo Hrushevskyi, that the history of the Kievan state must be viewed as the beginning of Ukrainian, rather than Russian, history. Russian historiography, by contrast, has sought to emphasize the continuity of Great Russia's inclusion in the Kievan state, the ethnic and cultural links between

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the two regions, and the Rurikid dynastic origins of the Great Russian princes of Vladimir-Suzdal and later Moscow. But for contemporary politics, this issue might also seem of more apparent than real importance.

Nonetheless, this controversy does draw attention to the need for precision of terminology: it would seem most appropriate to apply the term "Rus'" to this earliest state, rather than "Russia," a realm whose origins can be more easily associated with the land of Great Russia to the east. The name "Rus'" came, as a result of early political and ethnic expansion, to be applied to the whole region of East Slavic settlement and would continue to be the collective term applied to it for several centuries. Only in the 17th century can we distinguish fairly clearly two politically active and nationally self-conscious groups who were heirs to Rus' – the Great Russians and the Ukrainians.

The former group, in the form of the Grand Principality of Moscow, was to impose a new unity on the region in the 15th to 18th centuries, acting in this role as much as a successor of the nomadic Golden Horde as a successor of Kievan Rus'. In so doing, it would help to bring to an end a wide diversity of political and social formations that had evolved out of the early Kievan state.

By the 12th century, the political unity of Kievan Rus' had begun to disintegrate. The resurgence of instability on the southern steppe and the consequent interruption of the Dnieper trade were no doubt important factors in this process. However, the proliferation of members of the dynasty and a change from broader-ranging methods of tribute collection to more extensive and localized means of extracting princely and noble incomes certainly played a role as well.

Some parallels can be drawn here with the evolution of the medieval East Central European monarchies, notably Poland. The Rurikid patrimony was divided among a number of smaller territorial principalities, each territory associated more or less exclusively with a particular branch of the dynasty. Kiev maintained a nominal seniority, and the rulers of the leading principalities struggled to obtain control of it. In fact, however, the city and its adjacent territories declined in power and prosperity, a fact underlined by the devastating sack of Kiev by the armies of Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii of Vladimir-Suzdal in 1169.

Two other centers in the Dnieper basin that emerged as important contenders in the interprincely struggles of this period were Smolensk and Chernigov. These centers were eclipsed by the once-remote Vladimir-Suzdal land in the upper Volga basin to the northeast and Halych-Volhynia in the far southwest on the borders of Poland and Hungary.

Another major center of a somewhat different character was Novgorod, the great commercial emporium in the north, which developed in this period into a city-state republic dominated by a local *boiar* elite, with the prince being increasingly reduced to an "invited" magistrate and military leader.

The Problem of the Steppe and the Mongol Conquest

A key element in the success of the early Kievan state and its control of the north-to-south river road "from the Varangians [Vikings] to the Greeks" was its ability to contain, if not control, the potential threat presented by the Pontic steppe, a broad expanse of open grassland north of the Black Sea that was home to a nomadic society very different from that of the Slavic agriculturalists. The open plains adjacent to Rus' were but one part of a vast corridor stretching from the Danube delta in the west all the way to Mongolia and the borders of China in the east. (The enduring international character of this steppe corridor is aptly symbolized by the fact that as late as the 18th century, Ayuka Khan, chief of the nomadic Kalmuks, had on the one hand to pay taxes for the use of his grasslands to Russian Emperor Peter the Great, while continuing on the other to pay a head-tax for his people to the emperor of China.)

The strength of emergent Kievan Rus' vis-à-vis the steppe was evidenced not only by its long hold on towns of the Crimean peninsula, but also by its successful challenge to the previous lords of the steppe, the Khazars, whose capital Itil was sacked by the Kievan prince Sviatoslav in the 10th century. Some historians, in fact, argue for a kind of symbiosis in this period between the societies of the forest and the steppe, at least on the elite level. The activities of Sviatoslav and a surviving contemporary Byzantine description of him suggest that he was very much at home in the political world of the steppe. As late as the 11th century, we find the imperial steppe title of "Khagan" being ascribed to Kievan prince Iaroslav the Wise by Hilarion, metropolitan archbishop of Kiev.

It is worth noting that in the centuries that followed, two other such symbioses of the societies of the agricultural north and nomadic south, forged by conquest, would serve as the foundation for great Eurasian imperial states based in this region. The first, created by the Mongol conquest of the 13th century, existed into the 15th century. The second, begun with the Muscovite conquest of the khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan in the mid-16th century and reinforced by the annexation of the

Crimean state in 1783, has survived, in a sense, until today.

Whatever the source of the Kievan state's successful control of the steppe, it began to wane with the appearance of the new steppe coalition of the Polovtsians (Cumans) in the 11th century at the same time as the growing fragmentation of dynastic unity was rendering Rus' less capable of effective resistance. Increasingly, the Polovtsians were drawn into intradynastic strife or carried out their own raids against the territory of Rus'. Agricultural settlement began retreating backward again toward the protecting forest cover. Not until the 18th century was an East Slavic state again to exercise genuinely effective control of the Pontic steppe. In the intervening period, the steppe had to be reckoned with as a looming and unsettling presence, one limiting the developmental potential of the Kievan and Muscovite states.

Much is made in Russian historiography of the arduous push to colonize the lands to the north and east of the original Kievan heartland, to eke a living out of the harsh climate and poor soil of the forested north. An impressive achievement indeed, and one that sheds much light on the limitations imposed by the proximity of the nomadic peoples of the steppe. After all, just to the south of the protective forest belt lay some of the richest soils in Europe, soils which could not really be exploited in any kind of extensive fashion until the 18th century. Even in the 16th through 18th centuries, it was not simply the presence of the Ottoman Empire that hampered the southward movement of settlement, but, equally importantly, the continued vitality of nomadic society on these lands.

The persistent insecurity of the steppe helps to explain why the Volga and Dnieper River routes, once such major arteries of international trade, were reduced in the last several centuries to a role of such secondary importance. (In the 17th century, for example, transporting silk from Persia via the long sea route around Africa or overland to the Mediterranean was quicker, cheaper, and safer than going by way of the Caspian Sea and Volga River to the Baltic ports or Arkhangelsk.)

Much later, in the 16th and later centuries, the steppe would be the source of instability of another kind. Its frontier character made it a haven for a growing body of runaway peasants, adventurers, and brigands known as the Cossacks. Beyond the control of the state and resistant as well to the pressure of the nomads of the steppe, the Cossacks developed political and social organisms of their own, centered on the lower Don and lower Dnieper Rivers. While at times the Cossack hosts would act in concert with the Russian (and Polish-Lithuanian) state, at others they proved to be a powerful threat, most clearly demonstrated in their leading role in the upheavals of the Muscovite "Time of Troubles" of the early 17th century, the Khmelnitsky uprising against Poland-Lithuania in 1648, and the great revolts of Razin, Bulavin, and Pugachev in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The most dramatic period of confrontation, of course, was the Mongol Conquest of 1239-40 and the ensuing two-and-one-half centuries of overlordship by the Golden Horde, but the steppe was a key element in the periods before and after as well. It was not simply a question, moreover, of the death and destruction inflicted by nomadic raids: the nomads' human captives from Rus' also served as a major source of slaves for the markets of the Levant throughout this period. We can only guess at the precise demographic costs of this process, but they were no doubt very significant.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, expansionism of Vladimir-Suzdal and Halych-Volhynia indicates some movement toward reunification of the fragmented patrimony of Rus'; any such development, however, was brought to an abrupt halt by the Mongol invasion of 1239-40. In the space of two brief years, the armies of the expanding Chingisid empire swept first over the major centers of Vladimir-Suzdal in the northeast and then over Kiev and Halych-Volhynia in the southwest, wreaking incredible havoc and destruction. For almost two centuries (and formally until 1480), the khans of the Golden Horde would be the overlords of the lands they had conquered, demanding (though not always receiving) an enormous tribute from it.

To be sure, the Mongol yoke did not apply equally to all parts of Rus', and the differences served to deepen the regional divergencies that had emerged in the declining years of the Kievan state. The "yoke" in the fullest sense applied to the old Vladimir-Suzdal land and adjacent territories, since it was here that the rule of the Golden Horde was exercised most effectively and for the longest period of time. The Novgorodian republic in the far northwest had escaped the ravages of invasion, although it was, through the intermediary of the grand princes of Vladimir, brought into the tribute-gathering network of the Horde.

The other major area to have escaped the ravages of 1239-40 was the fairly extensive, though sparsely populated, region in the northwest that is today known as Belorussia. Despite some subsequent Tatar efforts to penetrate here, there is no evidence that any real overlordship was ever exercised. (One theory even has it that the name "Belorussia," literally "White Russia," originates from the Old Russian use of the word "white" to denote areas not subject to taxation – in this case, the Tatar tribute.) This area was, in fact, already coming under the rule of another power in the region, Lithuania, a state which by the mid-14th century was to control most of what is now Belorussia and the Ukraine (including Kiev), along with some neighboring parts of Great Russia as well. Finally, while the Golden Horde was able to exercise its claimed lordship over the principality of Halych-Volhynia in the early years following the invasion, the absorption of this region in the 14th century by Poland and Lithuania soon rendered this control formal at best.

Ultimately, beginning in the latter half of the 15th century, unified control of the scattered patrimony of Kievan Rus' (and a much wider area as well) was reimposed by Moscow, one of the principalities of the Vladimir-Suzdal land. It is with Moscow that the history of Russia (as distinct from the history of Rus') must be seen as beginning. It is here, too, that we must seek the real origins of the autocratic system that later characterized the Russian Empire.

The Autocracy

The societies of Europe display a wide variety of solutions to the ongoing struggle for power between government, society, and the individual. The peculiarity of the Muscovite Russian experience was the longstanding predominance of the state (government), not only over the individual but also over society. Medieval Muscovite society, no less stratified economically than the societies of Western Europe, nonetheless did not manage, throughout most of its history, to create an institution that could bring any of its component groups together in common defense of their interests vis-à-vis the ruler. Instead, the Muscovite ruler proved on the whole successful in avoiding the establishment of contractual relations with society (so typical of the medieval West), even with the petty military service class.

In the earliest part of the Mongol period, some attempt to challenge the authority of the prince in northeast Rus', particularly on the part of the towns, *did* take place, as evidenced by continual references in the sources to the roles of the city assembly (*veche*) and the commander of its militia (*tysiatskii*), institutions dating back to the Kievan period. Nonetheless, these forces never proved capable of creating strong, stable urban institutions that could seriously challenge the power of the prince. During the 14th and 15th centuries, the *veche* system completely disappeared from the old Vladimir-Suzdal land. In contrast to the situation prevailing in the West, as well as in Central Europe, no system of autonomous municipal self-government was ever established. Likewise, the military service class did not succeed in acquiring control of local territorial administration in rural regions. This failure of the Great Russians to challenge their ruler on an institutional basis made Muscovy one of the very few European lands with no full-fledged experience of medieval parliamentarism.

To be sure, even the later tsars found an occasional need for some degree of societal cooperation, a cooperation that was not so much requested as demanded (as was the case in the earlier stages of Western European parliamentarism). For this purpose, at intermittent intervals between the middle of the 16th and 17th centuries, assemblies of representatives of various social groups, known as *zemskie sobory* [assemblies of the land] were called to consult with the tsars and provide support for government actions. The practice began under Ivan the Terrible, that paragon of despotism, and was used from time to time by his successors, particularly the first two rulers of the new Romanov dynasty in the 17th century, Michael and Alexis.

The *sobor*, it is true, did provide in nascent form a representative organization of Russian society, with a conceivable potential for posing its own vision of the political and social order against that of the tsar. The high-water mark of its role may be seen in its involvement in the establishment of a new ruling dynasty in 1613 (discussed in greater detail below). Whatever its potential, however, this consultative body was no longer summoned in the second half of the 17th century. (The declining role and virtual disappearance of medieval parliamentary assemblies was by no means unique to Russia during this period; the same is true, for example, in France.)

The problem of the origins of Russian autocracy is a complex one, but a major role was played by the experience of the "Tatar Yoke." The princes under the rule of the khan were ultimately dependent on his will for their right to rule and were charged with the payment of tribute to the Horde from their lands. Indeed, Moscow's success in monopolizing the position of chief tax collector for the whole of northeast Rus' explains its ultimate political triumph in this region.

The pattern of political relations established by the period of Tatar sovereignty appears to have had a profound impact on Muscovite political tradition. The authority of the khan, when it could be practically exercised, was a fierce and uncompromising one. Defiance was likely to lead to devastating raids of reprisal. At the same time, contrary to some interpretations, it seems quite clear that the legitimacy of the khan's rule was recognized in Rus'. Sources from the period ascribe the title of "tsar" (emperor) to the khan, the same word used to describe the Byzantine emperor, who was, in theory: the only legitimate world ruler for Orthodox Christians.

It is interesting to note, too, that contemporary descriptions of the great victory of Moscow over the Tatars at Kulikovo in 1380 were careful to emphasize that the enemy leader, Emir Mamai, was an illegitimate usurper of the khanate, and not a true "tsar." The princes of Rus' were not averse to using Tatar aid in their internal struggles or vying for the khan's favor in order to obtain the senior title of grand prince. Such help, or the potential for it, even seems to have played an important role in the grand princes' victory over the *veche* during this period. Moreover, the lands and security of the church were protected by the khan in return for prayers for his well-being; even after the disappearance of Tatar suzerainty, the church was to appeal to this tradition in an effort to defend the inviolability of its lands.

Finally, the adoption of the title of "tsar" by Muscovite rulers in the 16th century can be seen in part as an assumption of the authority once enjoyed by the khan; it was explicitly linked with the conquest of the Chingisid khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan. Tatar princes of the old imperial dynasty continued to occupy a special place of honor at the Muscovite court in the 16th century. In a curious incident, Tsar Ivan the Terrible even placed one of them briefly on the throne as "ruler" of Muscovy in the late 16th century. Michael Cherniavsky, speaking of Moscow's unseating of its former Tatar overlords, notes that "What takes place is not so much the liberation of Russia as a change of dynasty, the conquest of Russia from its former legitimate ruler by the new legitimate tsar, the grand prince of Moscow...[T] here was a new khan..."

At the same time, the image of Muscovite imperial authority drew on the traditions of the other "tsar" of the medieval sources, the Byzantine emperor (*basileus*), with his claim to the sovereignty over the whole Christian world, church as well as state, as the representative of God on earth. The notion accorded well with the doctrine of Muscovy as the only sovereign defender of true, orthodox Christianity, an idea that began to take shape in the 15th century, particularly after the abortive and unpopular attempt of the Byzantines to effect a union of the Eastern and Western churches in 1439 and the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453.

The actual emergence of the Muscovite autocracy can be dated more or less to the middle of the 15th century, a time when Moscow had already established all but unchallenged primacy in the old Vladimir-Suzdal land and when Tatar control was waning, though it was still maintained in formal terms. The catalyst for the emergence of the new system was a bloody civil war within the Muscovite ruling family, in which the senior line succeeded in overthrowing the traditional order that had regulated relations between members of the dynasty for the sharing of the common patrimony. The violent process proved to be a major watershed. As Alexander Presniakov, one of the most insightful commentators on the rise of Moscow, has noted, "The stark methods of liquidation used by the grand prince's government during that upheaval first introduced the spectre of the 'terrible' tsar into life in Great Russia; the true embodiment of this terror came in the activities of Ivan III (1462-1505), his son Vasilii III (1505-1533), and the tsar who culminated all these dramas, Ivan the Terrible (1533-1584)."

Already under Ivan III, there was not only an increasing abrogation of the customary rules of interprincely relations, but also the beginning of a serious program for the "reconquest" of the Kievan patrimony, starting with the important annexations of Tver and Novgorod. Ivan III's reign also saw the end of the earlier freedom of *boiars* to transfer their service from one prince to another at will. Likewise, it witnessed increasing control of the metropolitans and hierarchy of the church by the grand prince, now referred to by the new title of "sovereign" (*gosudar*).

These tendencies continued under Ivan's son Vasilii III, whose famous dictum – "All are slaves" – expressed the growing subordination of society to its ruler. It was under Vasilii's son Ivan IV, "the Terrible," however, that the position of the ruler as utterly transcendent and unlimited in his authority found its most vivid expression. Under Ivan IV, the institutionalization of the autocracy proceeded apace; important new conquests of the Tatar khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan were made; a bold, though unsuccessful, attempt to conquer Livonia was undertaken; and a new imperial title, that of "tsar," was assumed.

His reign is best remembered, though, for the Oprichnina of 1565-72, in which the tsar, aided by a separate force of military servitors, imposed a reign of terror on his land in a campaign against "traitors," who eventually came to embrace broad numbers of virtually every part of the Muscovite elite. Various reasons have been advanced in an effort to explain this bizarre and bloody "purging," which resulted in the death or exile of countless numbers of the elite and even in the devastation of the city of Novgorod. Some would explain it as the result of an inherent discrepancy between the vast political needs of the state, born of its great size and geographical position, and the actual resources at its disposal, born of the harsh climate and poor soils of the region; others, as the reflection of particular stresses caused by the Livonian War; still others, as an expression of the pathological personality of Ivan.

It is significant that much Soviet historiography has portrayed these events as the inevitable struggle between a "progressive," centralizing state and those "reactionary," "feudal" elements that sought to hold it back. Whatever its cause, however, the Oprichnina made clear the awesome ability of the autocracy to use brutal power as a superordinate authority vis-à-vis Muscovite society. Responding to the denunciations of Prince Andrei Kurbsky, a *boiar* who had fled to Lithuania, Ivan wrote, equating betrayal of himself to a betrayal of Christianity: "...having raged against man, you have risen against God... If you are just as pious as you say, why did you fear a guiltless death, which is no death but gain?... Why did you despise even the apostle Paul? for he said, 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power ordained that is not of God... Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God...'"

Ivan the Terrible's devastating attack on the bases of all political and social authority other than that of the tsar himself had a profoundly unsettling effect on Russian society, particularly in the context of the economic decline and hardship of the late 16th century. These forces found expression, after the extinction of the Rurikid dynasty in 1593, in a period of immense social and political upheaval traditionally known as the "Time of Troubles" (1598-1613). Marked by fierce rivalry for the throne, peasant uprisings, brigandage, foreign intervention, and the virtual collapse of all central authority, the crisis came to an end only with the election of Michael Romanov as the tsar and the inauguration of a new dynasty in 1613.

On one hand, the catastrophic results of the disappearance of the Rurikid dynasty and the apocalyptic dimensions given by some contemporary commentators to the event bear witness to the seeming essential role of the autocrat in the political system as it had developed. It is characteristic that during the Time of Troubles pretenders claiming to be members of the former dynasty proved quite successful in challenging the authority of the non-Rurikid tsars of *boiar* origin, Boris Godunov and Vasilii Shuiskii: if elsewhere in early modern Europe socially discontented groups fought in the name of religion or of their corporate rights, in Muscovy it was in the name of the "true" tsar.

On the other hand, by the very nature of the situation, the Time of Troubles was also the moment of a potentially serious challenge to the state on the part of society. In the absence of a divinely ordained ruler, society itself was forced to intervene, to act in the name of God, as it were, to ordain another.

It would be interesting at this point to look at the groups that were involved in the reconstitution of the political order. Surprisingly enough, it was not the *boiars*, the traditional political elite, whom one might have expected to be the most capable of guiding the destinies of the state (by their self-destructive infighting they had demonstrated their increasing ineffectiveness as a source of authority). As the conditions which they had presented to potential pretenders to the throne suggested, they were well aware of and sought to obtain for themselves the same kind of narrow privileges and prerogatives enjoyed by the grandees of Lithuania vis-à-vis their grand prince. For a time, it is true, various *boiar* factions had been successful in their political maneuvering, so long as they were not hindered by some greater mass movements. However, after widespread outbreak of social unrest and by the time of extensive foreign (Polish-Lithuanian and Swedish) intervention, the *boiars* had clearly lost control of the situation. It was left to other groups of society to restore legitimate authority.

On the one hand was the church, unwilling to countenance the prospect of a ruler not fully Orthodox. On the other was the militia organized by some of the provincial towns and supported by the provincial military service class. Alongside these were the independent forces of the Cossacks, organized on the principle of military democracy, who shifted their support from one pretender to another and helped to radicalize the social stance of the masses of peasantry and city population. With the expulsion of the Polish-Lithuanian forces, all of these elements were drawn together in the *zemskii sobor* of 1613 that set out to elect a new monarch—traditional groups like the *boiar* Duma and ecclesiastical synod, but also, for the first time, new, genuinely representative elements like the militia and the Cossacks, groups which represented real strength but lacked any clear blueprint for the future. Their choice, the young Michael Romanov, representative of an old *boiar* family linked to Ivan IV by marriage, was essentially a compromise candidate. More acceptable to the traditional elements than the young child of the "Second Pretender," favored by some Cossacks, he was, by dint of his youth and the earlier connections of his father with the "Second Pretender" and Cossacks, less objectionable to the revolutionary elements than one of the other *boiar* candidates would have been. (This support of "the people" was reflected in the epithet "Cossack Tsar," applied to Michael by his rivals during this period.)

For a time, the new dynasty would feel the need to legitimize its rule by the continuing collaboration of the *zemskii sobor*. Gradually, however, the Romanovs were able to dispense increasingly with its services. After 1653 the assembly was not called again, except for a brief spate of activity between 1682 and 1684. The seemingly incredible erosion of the role of the *sobor*, which had been responsible for the reestablishment of unified political authority, is probably best explained by the deep social divisions already apparent in 1613, divisions which the autocracy could exploit to its own advantage. Moreover, as Presniakov has suggested, the Time of Troubles, despite its seeming challenge to centralized authority, in fact may have resulted in its strengthening, as the social chaos convinced the townspeople and military service class of the need for a strong political authority as a guarantee of security.

With the declining role of the *zemskii sobor*, we observe the increasing importance of the rapidly developing bureaucracy, organized on the basis of the system of *prikazy* (departments). The personnel for this apparatus were drawn from children of bureaucrats, as well as from the children of taxpaying people (*tiaglie liudi*). It was, in fact, one of the very few careers open to educated individuals. In a like manner, the palace guard (*streltsy*), a group that bears certain striking similarities to the Ottoman Janissary corps, was of humble origin. The basing of the bureaucracy and palace guards in non-noble population was a means of providing the autocracy with a greater sense of security. (This practice was to be changed substantially by Peter the Great, who would replace the *streltsy* with noble guards' regiments and open the road to ennoblement for the commoner bureaucrats.)

Society

The society of Kievan Rus' in many respects bore a resemblance to that of the other early monarchies of Eastern Europe, such as Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia. These monarchies were subsequently to evolve toward the social structure of a monarchy of estates in which the church, nobility, and to a lesser extent the towns came to enjoy privileges and rights vis-à-vis the monarch and other estates. But the society of Muscovy was clearly made up of orders whose status and rule revolved around the notion of service to the tsar. As in most European states, the landowning estate was socially dominant, although its position bore greater similarity to the Ottoman *sipahis* than to the nobility of France, Spain, Poland, or Hungary.

The Russian petty military servitors, who held all or most of their lands on the condition of military service to the monarch, came in time to bear the collective name of *dvorianstvo*, a name derived from the notion of service to the tsar's court (*dvor*). Above them was a stratum of aristocrats, members of the tsar's council (*boiar duma*), who performed important services as military commanders, administrators, and ambassadors. The members of the Duma, who numbered 29 in 1613 and 153 in 1690, consisted of *boiare*, *okolnichie*, *dumnye*, *dvoriane*, and *dumnye d'iaki*. The old Russian aristocracy, including the Mstislavskiis, Shuiskiis, Belskiis, Golitsyns, Trubetskois, Kurakins, Morozovs, Dolgorukovs, Sheremetevs, Obolenskiis, Cherkasskiis, and Khovanskiis (to mention a few) were unquestionably the most powerful people of the realm. Their elevated position, however, was not based on extensive landholdings, but on their hereditary service to the tsar in the most prominent positions of the state, army, and court. If one wants to examine the most obvious reasons behind the stratification of landowners, one should look not at the size of their landholdings or number of serfs, but rather at the degree of their closeness to the throne. When seen from this point of view, the main cleavage within the *dvorianstvo* is between those who served from Moscow and those who served from the provinces. The potential social mobility of these two groups was decisively different.

The great difference between the *dvorianstvo* and the nobility of Western Europe lay in the fact that the former was not only unable to win for itself control of its county and provincial administration, but also that it failed to win for itself even such fundamental rights as *habeas corpus* or exemption from corporal punishment. What it did share with its Western counterparts, unlike its Ottoman counterparts, was domination over its own peasantry. It is significant that for the 16th and much of the 17th century, an important determinant of status among military servitors was the system of precedence (*mestnichestvo*), which sought to regulate the relative positions of servitors in specific contexts not on the basis of their own place in the army or court, but on the basis of the rank that their forebears had held in the service of the tsar. Yet another of the signs of the dependence of this dominant class was the standard practice of its members, like those of other social groups, to refer to themselves in petitions to the tsar in the 16th and 17th centuries as "your slave" (*tvoi kholop*).

The picture was much the same for other social groups and institutions. The ultimate dependence of the ecclesiastical hierarchy on the tsar's will was poignantly expressed by their customary self-appellation in communications with the ruler as "your supplicants to God" (*tvoi bogomol'tsy*). The populations of the towns as a whole, as already suggested, were not protected by any body of prerogatives and privileges against their obligation to serve the needs of their all-powerful ruler. The Muscovite towns – the antithesis of the Novgorodian example – did not achieve any measure of self-rule, so important for the development of Western and Central European cities. The only self-governing cities of pre-Petrine Russia existed in the territory of the Ukraine (annexed in the 17th century), where Magdeburg Law (protecting self-government) was curtailed but not abolished after 1654. In other areas, the town population was under the direct control of the tsar's officials and provided the state with various types of taxes and services.

Russian cities had their own "aristocracies," composed of small groups of entrepreneurial financiers and wholesale merchants (known as *gosti*), whose financial resources were often used for the state; in return, they were sometimes given the right to collect taxes. Between these small groups of individuals, who enjoyed the unheard-of right of foreign travel, and local merchants and craftsmen, existed as much of a gap as between the great bankers (i.e., Fuggers) and shoemakers in Western cities. However, while Western European financiers often merged through marriage and service with the local landed aristocracy, in Russia this divide appears to have been unbridgeable.

The urban classes came in the course of the late 16th century to be more fully organized for purposes of state service. Legislation of the mid-17th century, in an effort to prevent the flight of urban taxpayers, bound city dwellers to their town of residence, much as peasants were being bound to the land in this period in the final imposition of serfdom (in accordance with a law of 1658, townspeople who fled their place of residence were to be punished by death). We should remember, however, that the cities of Muscovy, whose populace on several occasions staged social and political uprisings, were able to gain some improvement in their status by reducing the rights of churchmen and the aristocracy in the cities.

The largest and lowest-ranking social group was the peasantry. Most difficult was the lot of those living on the lands of the military servitors. While their lords were bound by obligations of service to the autocrat, the peasants in turn were bound to the service of their masters as a means of enabling the latter to perform their obligations. In the course of a long process, which reached its culmination in 1649, the peasants of private landowners were bound to the land and to the labor services and rents which that entailed. They likewise were deprived of any status as legal persons. Peasants were obliged to provide landowners with a tax in kind, with money, or with unpaid labor. On those territories where it was profitable for landowners (due to good soil, closeness to markets, etc.), the latter were interested in increasing the amount of free labor (*barshchina*) due to them. On the territories with poor soil, landowners demanded from their peasants payments in money or kind (*obrok*). From the 16th century on, we can observe the steady growth of *barshchina* and a steady decline of *obrok*. In the 17th century, *barshchina* had grown to three days a week per family. In short, the position of the peasantry in pre-Petrine Russia was constantly deteriorating.

The peasantry's lack of any legal status was codified in the law of 1649. It should be remembered, however, that the worst period for the peasantry still lay ahead, in the 18th and early 19th centuries, when its status would be reduced to little different than that of the slaves of the American South. Moreover, this worsening was to coincide with the emergence of an unprecedented cultural gulf between a Westernized nobility and a traditional peasantry – the creation, in a sense, of two separate "nations" within Russian society. Somewhat less onerous were the obligations of peasants living on the landed estates of the church. Easiest of all were those of the state or tsar's own peasants, who were responsible, via their own commune (*volost*), for the payment of taxes and the performance of required services.

The territorial peasant commune had existed from the beginning of Kievan Rus'. In the 16th and 17th centuries, however, it was more a tool in the hands of the landowners and state than an instrument for the defense of the peasantry. Peasant communes, for that matter, had a vital interest in ensuring that their members did not flee or shirk their obligations. Hence, they were not an agent for enforcing the solidarity of the commune vis-à-vis the state, but rather for enforcing the solidarity of the commune in the interests of service to the state. In medieval Europe, runaway serfs found freedom in the self-governing towns; in Russia, desperate serfs could find relative safety from their pursuing lords only by joining the Cossacks or moving to the borderlands of the steppe or Siberia.

The Church

The decision of Prince Vladimir of Kiev to accept conversion at the hands of the church of Constantinople in 988 meant the inclusion of Kievan Rus' in the cultural sphere of the old Eastern Roman empire, the "Byzantine Commonwealth" as Dmitri Obolensky has styled it. However, the access of Rus' to the heritage of classical antiquity was more restricted than that of its barbarian counterparts in Western Europe. This was due in large part to the medium of transmission, which was not the language of the culture metropolis (as in the Latin world) but Church Slavonic. Most of the translations into this language from the Greek were of an ecclesiastical character, leaving behind much of the secular and philosophical heritage of the Hellenistic and Roman worlds. For that matter, the response of Rus' even to this narrower legacy, as George Florovsky has demonstrated, was long a remarkably passive, conservative one, aiming more at preservation than speculation (cf. the great theological syntheses of the medieval West).

Nonetheless, the deeply religious character of Old Russian culture is particularly striking. As already noted, an important part of Moscow's self-consciousness was the notion that it alone had remained true to genuine Christianity. Even literary works of a secular character from this period seem to echo the language of the Bible. Viewing Rus' through the icon, one might be surprised by the apparent weakness of the Russian church at the beginning of the 18th century, when it submitted so meekly to the ecclesiastical reform of Peter the Great. This reform turned the church, in essence, into a department of the state, ruled by a ministerial collegium rather than by a patriarch. To understand this transformation, one must examine the relation between church and state in Muscovite Rus' and the respective roles assigned to the church, believers, and ruler.

It would be an oversimplification to merely note that the Byzantine church was much more subservient to secular authority than the Western one was: after all, subservience was not the only existing tradition in the Eastern Christian experience. However, in the case of the Russian church, it may be said that the tradition of Agapetus, who gave unquestioned priority to the emperor in the governance of the Christian community, was the prevailing one, particularly after the break with Constantinople in the mid-15th century and the beginning of local elections of the head of the Muscovite church. The latter procedure, in practice, gave the grand prince the deciding voice in the appointment of the leadership of the church. The efforts of later hierarchs to challenge princely authority, such as Metropolitan Phillip's condemnation of the tyranny of Ivan the Terrible or Patriarch Nikon's more fundamental attempt to assert the prerogatives of the church vis-à-vis secular authority. All these efforts ultimately ended in the downfall of their proponents.

A mass reaction to the increasing congruence of state and church may be seen in the schism of the 17th century, in which a not-inconsiderable body of believers abandoned the official church in reaction against what they saw as its domination by the forces of the antichrist. It seems significant, however, that the Old Believers, as these schismatics came to be known, found themselves powerless to challenge the forces they abhorred. They could only seek to protect themselves by withdrawing to preserve their purity while awaiting the coming apocalypse.

The Multinational Character of the State

The conception of authority inherited from the Golden Horde no doubt helps explain the expansionism as much as does the notion of regaining the "patrimony" of the Kievan state, which figured so largely in the diplomatic statements of the Muscovite autocracy. Indeed, the autocracy in the 16th century had already come to encompass a number of states and national groups. In later centuries, it was to become even more of a multinational empire, including not only the territories of Kievan Rus', but the lands once ruled by the Golden Horde as well.

There is little doubt about the existence of a profound xenophobia on the part of Muscovite society, so well documented in accounts left by foreign travelers. While such a notion was clearly related to the idea of Muscovy as the only home of "true" Orthodox Christianity, even co-religionists from other countries were not above suspicion, while non-Christian peoples of the empire ("our pagans") were generally left in peace. What is more, however paradoxical it may seem, this suspicion of everything foreign went hand-in-hand with the systematic utilization of the skills and know-how of foreign specialists and representatives of conquered populations. For example, the majority of the professionals working in the most secret and sensitive ministry of the 17th century state, Foreign Affairs, were foreigners.

The importance of the services of foreigners and conquered populations for strengthening the Muscovite state is unquestionable. At the end of the 15th century, for example, following the conquest of the Novgorodian republic, merchants from that city-state were resettled in Moscow and other towns of the realm with the aim of putting their professional know-how and connections with the West to work for the enrichment of the state, their personal feelings toward their conquerer notwithstanding. Likewise, merchants and craftsmen deported from Poland-Lithuania to Muscovy in the mid-17th century populated a whole suburb of the capital, known as the Panskaia or Litovskaia Sloboda, where, like the Novgorodians before them, they were made to serve the state against their will. Similarly, a detachment of Polish and Lithuanian soldiers, taken prisoner in the late 1650s, were sent to fight on the Amur River in the Far East.

Judging from its treatment of foreigners and above all its own population, it would appear that the rulers of the Muscovite state were guided by a deep conviction about the unworthiness of human nature. While Machiavelli, for example, sought to make use of the selfish side of human nature for the benefit of society, the Muscovite government was seemingly content to make use of human weakness and fear to strengthen the power of the state.

The characteristics of the Muscovite state came in time to be exported to the territories brought under its control, pushing out the earlier traditions that had prevailed there and thereby impoverishing those native cultures. However, it needs to be emphasized that the Middle Ages saw the development of a wide variety of sociopolitical systems on the former territories of Kievan Rus'.

In Novgorod, for example, which by the beginning of the 14th century controlled a vast region stretching from the borders of Livonia in the West to the Ural Mountains in the East, one can see the evolution of a political system reminiscent in many ways of that of the Italian city-states. Here the *veche* traditions that had died out in the Vladimir-Suzdal land in the 14th century continued to thrive in a unique form until their abolition after the city-state's absorption by Moscow in the 1470s. In Halych and Volhynia in the Southwest, on the other hand, one finds a system closer to that of the kingdoms of Central Europe, in which royal authority was challenged and shared by a powerful nobility.

Yet another pattern was that of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, an enormous political formation that came to occupy most of the western lands of Rus', including Kiev itself, in the 13th and 14th centuries. Originally a loose confederation of principalities ruled by the Lithuanian Gedyminid dynasty, in which local traditions and customs remained largely untouched, this state, after its union with the Kingdom of Poland in 1385, came increasingly to conform to the emerging institutional model of the latter state. This evolution culminated in the formation of a unified Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 16th century, characterized by a strong parliamentary tradition and well-defined prerogatives and rights of the nobility vis-à-vis the monarch. The peculiarity of Lithuania vis-à-vis the Polish Crown lands was, however, until the end of the period discussed here, the overwhelming predominance of the great aristocratic families over both the sovereign and the lesser nobility, a situation on which the *boiars* of Muscovy could only gaze with envy.

The region around Kiev, by the time of its incorporation into Muscovy, likewise had come to display its own unique pattern of political evolution. Ukraine, as it would henceforth be known, had evolved into a state in which, in contrast to the situation prevailing in Great Russia, the interests of society were quite strongly represented. While the society's deep sense of its rights and prerogatives can be seen in the efforts of the towns of the region to assert their autonomy, the dominant factors here were the nobility and army, in which during the 17th century, one can witness a pronounced struggle between the supporters of Cossack republicanism and the monarchism of the hetmans.

Ukraine, by virtue of the culture and mentality of its elite, belonged much more to Latin than Orthodox Europe. It and – to a lesser degree – the Eastern lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were thus in a position to serve as important channels of Western learning and know-how into 17th century Russia. One cannot overlook the substantial contribution of Ukrainian churchmen-intellectuals-bureaucrats and military personnel in the process of modernization initiated by Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich; later, under Peter the Great as well, the role of learned Ukrainians continued to be of considerable significance.

Conclusion

While the reforms of Peter the Great have been characterized, and correctly so, as a radical change in the direction of Russion historical development, the patterns of relations between ruler, society, and individual developed during the preceding centuries continue to be valid in times of Peter and his successors. In a curious way, these links to the past become even more apparent after the revolution of 1917, with the formation of a political system placing even greater emphasis on service to the state and on the role of that state in the control and exploitation of all the resources of society, human as well as material.

RUSSIA FROM 1689 TO 1825/55

by Marc Raeff

The period from the late 17th century to the middle of the 19th is not only long, but also crowded with events. The only way we can do justice to it is to point out some broad themes that give some coherence to the period, although we should always be aware that overly neat coherence is very misleading – history is never "neat" – and we might want to guard against it. Still, I think that for you as well as for your students, some sense of coherence is better than a chaotic jumble of facts and events that may not be very meaningful in themselves. Obviously, I will be very selective. My focus will be on developments in the 18th century, partly because I have done much of my work on them, but also because I think they were seminal and determined the shape of things in the 19th century (and perhaps even beyond).

The Political Culture Prior to Peter the Great

As indicated by Professor Keenan, the Russians have certain notions about their own history, one of the most crucial and permanent of which is a sense of breaks and discontinuities. Every nation has probably had a number of events that, in retrospect, seem to have provided an element of discontinuity. I believe, however, that while Western European historical consciousness tends to stress the continuity of historical experience, the Russians' awareness of their own history emphasizes breaks: there was a fundamental break, it is believed, between Kiev and the subsequent period of the Mongol/Tatar conquest and domination; another break occurred with the emergence of Moscow. Finally, one of the most important breaks in pre-revolutionary Russian historical consciousness occurred at the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th. This break is associated with the reign of Peter I (Peter the Great, 1689-1725).

Professor Kaminski has described how the tsar and his immediate advisors (in the *boiar duma*) emerged as an autocratic, centralized political power by the end of the 16th century. In this respect, the Russian development was similar, or parallel, to what took place in Western Europe between the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 17th centuries: the emergence of centralized, absolutist monarchies. This development displayed in Russia a feature that differentiated it from its Western European counterpart: the Western European monarchies evolved against a background of a large number of corporate and social institutions or associations that had autonomous lives of their own. They performed certain economic, religious, social, and cultural functions in society, which they carried out primarily outside the immediate supervision and control of the centralized state. To bring about the centralized monarchy, rulers in Western and Central Europe had to enlist or force the cooperation of these various "intermediary bodies" – *pouvoirs intermédiaires* as Montesquieu would call them – without whose help the monarch could not control and govern the state. Russia had no counterpart of these Western intermediary bodies, so that the autocratic power of the tsar operated in a vacuum, as it were. His was the only political authority: there was a tsar and there was a people. There were none (or only in very embryonic form) of the institutions (corporations, guilds, estates, professions, ecclesiastical authorities) that gave an identity to the social structures of Western Europe and assisted in the governance of the polity.

A well-known theme in the history of early modern Western and Central Europe was the struggle of the emerging monarchies against the power of nobles and church. There had not been any parallel phenomenon in Muscovy. Indeed, the Russian nobility, by whatever definition, was also a military class, but it did not have the kind of strong local base that the various noble lords had in Western medieval society. Nor was the church an independent power that could oppose the state. From the very beginning, the church was in much more of a subordinate position – it is partly a Byzantine heritage – politically speaking. There may have been brief moments when the Church of Moscow tried to challenge the tsar, but it failed immediately. Finally, there were no towns in the sense that Western Europe knew them – that is, able to support or oppose an absolute monarch. In consequence, by the middle of the 17th century, Russian society was fully controlled by an autocratic tsar. His ways – both the form of administration and its symbols – partake greatly of the eastern model (Tatar or Persian), as Professor Keenan has pointed out.

What of the peasantry, who after all constituted 95 percent of the population? I am not sure that we know enough about the peasantry as a social group. However, we do know that until the middle of the 17th century, the peasantry remained relatively free and was organized in village communes whose exact nature and operating procedures we still do not know adequately. In the 17th century, the gap between the peasantry and the central administration, whose attention was concentrated on military might and fiscal revenue, was great. The tsar and his court did not reach down to the village level, nor were they interested in doing so, provided the peasantry remained quiet. With the exceptions of some important rebellions, mainly on the periphery of the state, law and order were maintained. Under the circumstances, the central administrative bodies preferred to work through the mediation of the peasant commune. One might say that the peasant commune was one of the intermediary bodies whose absence, or weakness, we have noted earlier. Like all peasant organizations in premodern times, however, the Russian village commune could not radiate its authority beyond the narrow confines of the village and have any concerns that did not directly affect its members.

In the second half of the 17th century, the political culture that had developed in Muscovy since the end of the 15th century entered a period of crisis brought about by a variety of factors. The most visible of these factors was the conflict among rival court parties that threatened chaos for the administration. For a number of economic and social reasons, there was also a great deal of turmoil in the countryside; frontier, peasant, and urban rebellions put in question Moscow's effective control of its territory.

Of particular significance was the break in the religious consensus that took place in the middle of the 17th century. At that time Patriarch Nikon introduced a number of reforms: the ecclesiastical organization was changed so as to effectively erode parish autonomy (e.g., right to nominate the local priest) and secure the absolute domination of the Patriarch and his staff in Moscow; the ritual (e.g., manner of crossing oneself, singing the mass) was "cleansed" of practices that had developed over the centuries in Muscovy and brought in line with the contemporary Greek forms. Moreover, these reforms were introduced so as to provoke the resistance of a significant minority of the population: about a quarter of the Russian people, and many members of the clergy and elite, refused to accept these reforms and stuck to what was to be called the "Old Belief." The church had recourse to the support of the state to enforce the reforms and to put down the opposition; a split resulted—the so-called Schism of the Old Believers, who were persecuted by the government.

Besides bringing untold hardships, the persecution of the Old Believers also shattered the consensus on which the Muscovite state culture had rested—a consensus based on an acceptance of the religious foundation of society and harmonious interworking between church and state. A large minority now came to be convinced that the state had ceased to be the "Orthodox Moscow" that they could rely upon and that it had become an instrument of antichrist. To obey antichrist was to jeopardize one's salvation.

Muscovite society did not seem to possess the cultural or institutional means to overcome the crisis. With Moscow torn by manifold conflicts, the tsar's power, too, was put into question by the problems of succession and the rivalries of various court (and family) factions. Contemporaries felt that the stability of Muscovy was nearly at an end; on its own the polity could not generate the forces necessary for a change. That is where Peter I came in. When he ascended the throne (more precisely, when he was old enough to rule by himself, ca. 1694), the necessity of resolving the crisis had become more pressing; at the same time it appeared that a set of ideas and practices about government that existed outside of Muscovy pointed to a way out. There seemed to be a way of restructuring the entire political life of the country, while reinforcing Russia's position within the family of European states.

The Well-Ordered Police State

The model that had been emerging in Central and Western Europe since the end of the 16th century and that had been successfully adopted in practice in the majority of European states was the "well-ordered police state"; "police" was used not in the modern sense, but in the sense of orderly and effective administration. The significant characteristic of the new set of ideas and practices was the belief that the potential of economic, cultural, and social resources was far greater than had been assumed heretofore. In the Middle Ages, by and large, people had believed that God had created the world as they knew it and that He had put a very definite limit to the resources available to the creatures He had settled on this earth. The only thing that humans could do was make use of these resources or be at the mercy of unknown and unknowable nature.

In the late 16th century—partly stimulated by Renaissance modes of thought, partly as a consequence of discoveries and explorations of the New World and elsewhere, and partly also the result of great advances made by science in understanding the forces of nature—a new notion arose: that nature's potential was much greater and that with the help of science one could know how nature operates and thus discover new productive resources. Applying reason and will, humans could expand the store of resources that in the long run would benefit them both materially and culturally. The task of government and of the educated elite, therefore, was to reorganize society so as to make it more productive, to bring out latent resources to benefit society and, naturally, the state. To this end, governors needed to use modern science to discover and husband new resources, but they also had to organize the labor of society for increased productivity and efficiency: people should not live from hand to mouth, or from year to year as the peasant was wont to do, but should look ahead and invest for the future.

In the West, given the level of technology of communications and transportation available at the time, this program could be implemented by the central government only if the latter obtained the collaboration, whether under duress or willingly, of the various intermediary associations, corporations, and institutions mentioned earlier. Only with their help could the well-ordered police state's program of disciplining and educating a productive society be carried out. We can also easily see that an important role in this process would be played by the military, the immediate beneficiary of an increase of productivity and a better harnessing of the forces of society, because it relied on the kind of leadership and entrepreneurial skills that were necessary to guide and educate society for ever-growing productivity.

Peter I, his advisors, and certain segments of the Muscovite elite believed that they had to adopt the Western model of the well-ordered police state in order to get Muscovy out of its crisis and to enhance the authority and prosperity of the state and the population. To this end, they had to build an administrative and military apparatus that would be on an equal footing with that of Western and Central European states; the military establishment was modernized and patterned after the existing European models (mainly Swedish and Prussian) as was the administration. But the Russia of Peter did not have those structures or links that would assist the central government in carrying out this program of modernization. The only thing Peter I could do was expand the central government and try to reach further into the fabric of society.

The Muscovite tsars had generally been content with a negative approach to government; that is, their task, as they saw it, was to keep law and order at home and defend the country against enemies (which did not preclude going on the offensive if possible). The government of Peter, however, set itself the further goal of transforming Russian society to make it more productive, to bring more wealth into circulation, and thereby increase the benefits of both state and country.

The central administration was thus assigned more functions than in the past, not only to support a larger modern military establishment and to make sure that taxes were collected, but also to promote and organize manufacturing and trade. In Russia this had to be done with the help of the central government's officialdom. (Professor Kaminski has used the word "bureaucracy" and has shown that the administrative apparatus had already expanded in the 17th century before Peter I. I prefer to use the word "officialdom," rather than "bureaucracy," because I think the latter has too modern a connotation – but that is a minor point of disagreement.) Peter the Great was the first to use the central official apparatus as the main driving force to organize, discipline, and educate the country.

I cannot go here into details of the structure of Peter's modernized governmental apparatus. Most textbooks describe the various institutions Peter I created, which served as a basic framework for the government of the empire until its demise in the 20th century. Even while expanding the central government, Peter still confronted the difficult problem of having the will and orders of the government reach into the very depth of the Russian social fabric. He had to increase the number of officials, which involved an expansion of the service class. Peter sought candidates for service positions among foreigners and newly conquered elites, among the urban classes, among the clergy, and so on. But there was a limit. The government did not have enough money to reward or pay all these new officials. Even more important, the pool of potential candidates was very limited. In fact, the pool was limited to the traditional service class, those who had constituted the military service class in Muscovy and from whom the tsars had drawn their courtiers and helpmates. In order to make it possible to draw from other sectors of society, Peter restructured the status and organization of the service class.

In the 17th century, the service group was mainly hereditary. It was subdivided into several categories. It was very difficult to move from one category to the next higher one. The process usually took several generations of very serious efforts, of good service performance, of clever marriage arrangements, of finding the right patron. Peter, in need of personnel, decided to break the system and make it more flexible by introducing the Table of Ranks. By the terms of the Table, every noble had to serve for life, on a permanent basis, as the government decided, and wherever he was sent. Promotion would be on the basis of merit or length of service; in principle it became possible for someone not of noble origin to acquire nobility for himself and his children by dint of meritorious service.

Even more important than the small opening of the class of state servitors to newcomers was the fact that rank (i.e., status in service) became the most important criterion of status in society. Wealth was secondary, though through rank (i.e., service) one could also attain wealth. For this reason, the term "nobility" may be a little misleading. Nobility in the context of 18th- and 19th-century Russia only denotes status within the Table of Ranks, or the fact of belonging to a family that had always held a service position. The economic situation of the nobility was not a prime factor; there existed very poor nobles who depended on service for their livelihood. On the other hand, even a rich man did not enjoy the status of a nobleman unless he also had a respectable service rank. As a matter of fact, the overwhelming number of Russian "nobles" were poor, possessing neither enough land nor serf labor to support them and thus forced to stay permanently in the service of the state. True, service not only provided them with a salary but could be the source of additional gifts, grants, and special favors on the part of the ruler or his collaborators.

Because the bulk of the nobility depended on state service, it was an obedient tool of the government. This also accounts for the fact that noble status did not entail rights and privileges that the Crown could not touch, nor did it guarantee security of person or property either—at least not until the end the 18th century, if then. Until the second half of the 18th century, a nobleman could be subjected to corporal punishment, just as anyone else could. Deprivation of status was also easy (and common) until the end of the 18th century; even after that time it could be inflicted by administrative action. In short, the Russian nobility did not enjoy the economic and personal security and legal status of their counterparts in the West. They remained at the mercy of the government, whose tools they had to be.

The impetus and guiding direction of the well-ordered police state were given by the sovereign. In the West, the ruler (monarch) had to take account of balancing forces—the church, associations of provincial estates or towns, professional and trade guilds, and so on. The history of absolutism to the 19th century was largely one of conflicts between monarch and these constituted bodies, of compromises and arrangements made between government and the various orders of society. In Russia, the emperor (Peter changed the title from tsar to emperor in 1721) and his advisors were not only the initiators and prodders in disciplining society, they were also the forces that coordinated the activities of institutions and held the monopoly of adjudicating whatever conflicts might arise between government and society and also between members of the establishment. The emperor was the last resort for settling all social and political conflicts as would arise in a society with clans or families constantly vying for greater power, or as newcomers tried to break into the circle of influence and prestige. The personal authority of the monarch had always to be put into action not only to resolve conflicts but also to give direction and implement policy decisions.

As a result, from the time of Peter I and well into the 19th century, there was a constant strain between personal and institutionalized ("routinized" in Max Weber's terminology) authority. This was true of the central government, where all attempts at instituting rule by "permanent laws" or basic regulations failed because both ruler and ruled preferred to leave latitude to the intervention of personal authority. Similarly, the pattern prevailed on the lower levels of public life: governors and other officials acted as personal representatives of the ruler, exercising a personal type of authority and preventing the elaboration of automatic, routine operation of laws and regulations. This trait was carried farther onto the very lowest level of the relationships of authority. The landlord, since the peasants had become his serfs, was like the emperor: he was the "tsar" of his serfs and ruled them on the basis of his personal authority exclusively (to what extent he acquiesced to customary law, as expressed and implemented by the village commune and its assembly, is a matter of controversy in the scholarly literature).

Quite obviously, the personal nature of authority or political power stands in opposition to government by regulations and laws. Yet the latter was the underlying assumption of the well-ordered police state, which aimed at having things run by institutions along rational, routine lines so as to maximize efficiency. The strain between the conflicting attitudes of personal as contrasted to institutionalized (routinized) authority was never resolved in imperial Russia. It explains why bureaucratization could never be carried to its logical consequences, as it was in Prussia in the 19th century. On the other hand, it also explains why autocracy survived for so long.

The Russian Peasantry

In any event, as the central state apparatus grew and took on more and more responsibilities, its ability to reach the mass of the population, especially the peasantry, remained embryonic. This situation, which continued unchanged well into the 19th century, explains the particular aspects of Russia's peasantry and of its fate. The Russian peasantry had become fixed to the soil over a period of several generations, starting sometime in the 16th century. By the middle of the 17th, the peasant of central European Russia had been deprived of his mobility. He could not leave his village without permission of the state or local landowners. His only way out was to run away—and many peasants did escape to the frontier regions, the steppes of the south and southeast or the Ural Mountains and Siberia.

One of the tasks of Peter's government and service elite was to see to it that the peasantry remained fixed to the land so as to control it, collect revenue, and have a labor force at their disposal. The peasantry not only paid money into the treasury (each male peasant was assessed a capitation or poll tax payment), but also provided recruits for the army (a peasant recruit had to serve for 25 years – virtually for life) and the labor force for public works and conveying military supplies (e.g., building of St. Petersburg and of canals, carting, maintenance of postal relays).

The imperial government had to reach the population in order to get its money and labor and also in the hope of eventually disciplining and educating it for more productive habits. The central government did not have the manpower or the technical means to accomplish this task unaided. In the absense of such intervening institutional links as existed in the West, the Russian government concluded that the best solution was to leave control of the peasantry to the landowners: rewarding noble servitors with estates and letting them dispose of the peasants' labor. In this way, gradually, the peasantry already attached to the soil became attached to the person of the landlord as well. Serfdom of the medieval Western European type was transformed in Russia into a special type, similar to that prevailing in East Central Europe, but the Russian peasant became a serf who was a virtual chattel of the owner. By the end of the 18th century few differences distinguished the Russian serf from the black slave in the antebellum South.

It should be noted, however, that only a little over one-half of the peasants belonged to individual serf owners. The remainder (aside from a few special categories numbering a relatively small number of persons) were attached to the soil and "belonged" to the state; that is, they came under the control of government officials and institutions. Since the government apparatus was underdeveloped on the local level, the so-called state peasants enjoyed a degree of autonomy and personal freedom within the framework of their village communes. They could, however, be given away to individual owners whom the ruler wished to reward. In the course of the 18th century, close to 1 million souls (i.e., male peasants) were thus transformed into private serfs; in the same period 800,000 souls belonging to church institutions became state peasants. (The practice of giving away state peasants to individuals ceased in the early years of the 19th century.)

Because he had to serve the state and absent himself from the estate, the landlord-serviceman could not supervise his serfs closely either. It was convenient to appoint a bailiff, a manager, or delegate a relative, but it was still more convenient to let the existing village institutions – the peasant commune in particular – supervise the fulfillment of the serfs' obligations. This explains the survival (some historians have argued that it was even a strengthening) of the communal village arrangements to which Professor Keenan referred. Another facet of the situation complicated matters still further: the "moral economy" of serfdom was not only a legal and economic arrangement by which the peasant spent part of his labor time working for the state and the landlord; it was also an institutional arrangement in which the interests of the landlord and those of the peasants were inextricably intertwined. What do I mean by that?

Let us first take the situation of the noble landlord. He may have possessed a large estate granted by the emperor for services. The ruler, however, was careful to avoid the servicemen's challenging his power. To preclude such a possibility, the sovereign granted estates not in one piece but in scattered parcels, not in one district, but in several. A wealthy landowner possessing both much land and many peasants to work it did not have, in fact, a single big estate on which he would reign as if it were his own kingdom; rather he had many holdings distributed all over the country (or Central Russia). As a result, in one village there were quite often two or three (or even more) landlords; consequently, in order to accomplish anything effectively, they had to get together and agree on common action. This proved very difficult because most landlords were absent, serving the state; in addition, they were suspicious of each other, so that agreement was not easy (and that leaves out of account the unavoidable situations of conflict over boundaries, trespass, etc.).

Furthermore, the Eastern Slavs in general, and the Russians in particular, had a tradition of dividing inheritances among all children, including unmarried daughters, and making an allotment for the widow. They knew neither primogeniture nor entail (nor *Majorat*) with one son or child inheriting all of the land and other immovables. Consequently, estates were splintered; over several generations, a large estate – if not replenished – might be broken up into several small ones. Moreover, every parcel of the original estate consisted of several units scattered all over the map, so that each unit was very small and economically not very profitable. In the majority of cases, Russian noblemen did not do well. Of course there were exceptions of extremely wealthy landlords, but their wealth was the result of special favor shown by the ruler. In the countryside, some 90 percent of the nobility were too poor to modernize and improve their holdings—they lacked money, time, or skills to do so.

The landlord also had to operate in conjunction with the peasant community. The system of inheritance and repartition also applied to the peasants. The peasant community, which was by and large the rule in Central Russia, would periodically divide the land among the households, depending on the number of able-bodied men in each household. In making this repartition, the community tried to be as fair as possible, allotting a parcel each of very fertile, medium fertile, and forest (or meadow) land to every household. The result was that the commune's land was split up into strips, and each household had to work several small strips that often were far apart. The peasant thus had to spend considerable time walking from one parcel to the other. The yield was very low; the peasant lived perilously close to the margin of starvation.

It was difficult to persuade a whole community to introduce anything new. First, everyone had to agree to do it, for under conditions of extreme splintering of allotments the peasant could not work his furrow without trespassing on those of others, or seed and harvest at specific times without regard to his neighbors' work schedule. Secondly, the very low yields made the peasant fearful of innovation, even when given the means to introduce new techniques, tools, or crops. He was afraid that during the period of transition he would be at the mercy of chance events—whether natural or human—that could bring him to the verge of starvation. The traditionalism and caution of peasants all over the world were reinforced by the Russian peasant's cruel dependence on his neighbors and fellow members of the village commune. The intricate network of dependence of the peasants on each other, and of the landlord on the peasant commune, resulted in a highly rigid situation in which improvements and innovations were very hard to bring about.

The form of economy based on serfdom that developed in the early 18th century remained a permanent feature of Russia for a long time—to the abolition of serfdom in 1861. It was very difficult to reform (or break) and became a major handicap for the economic development of the country. It placed restraints on the state's and service elite's efforts at "modernizing" or Europeanizing the country. It required a change of mind on the part of the government and society to abolish the system in the middle of the 19th century—rather late in the game. Even after the abolition of serfdom, many of the features that continued to handicap the development of Russia's economy and the peasantry's access to Europeanization can be traced to the pattern established in the 18th century. In thinking about the transformation of Russia initiated by Peter the Great, we must keep in mind that for the bulk of the Russian peasantry it was not effective immediately; only gradually and piecemeal, in selected areas, did the government's Westernizing policies affect the peasant population.

Westernization

From the time of Peter I until the middle of the 19th century, the state took the lead in the modernization of the country. This was in contrast to England, France, and to a great extent Germany, where society was the leader, with the government or the state merely providing some means to facilitate the process. Insofar as the state had difficulty in reaching the peasantry, it decided simply to leave it out. If the mass of the peasantry was not immediately affected, the noble service elite of Russia certainly was. It is remarkable that within two generations at most, the Russian service class had accepted and internalized the program of Europeanization that had been forced on them by Peter I. In other words, they had been successful in most respects in their efforts at becoming similar to their counterparts, the nobility of Western and Central Europe. This internalization was primarily manifested by their willingness, nay eagerness, to accept Western education as the very basis of their identity. To be an educated person in the European sense, one had to be able to read, understand, and enjoy the culture, literature, and art of the West; one also had to try to lead a life akin to that of nobility in Western Europe. This became the *sine qua non*, the necessary precondition for membership in the elite. If one did not serve the state or withdrew from service, one was deemed a member of the elite only to the extent that one had acquired Western education. The reverse was also true. Whatever one's origins, if one were fully Western by education, outlook, and way of life, one belonged naturally to the elite.

The acceptance and absorption of Western education meant also incorporation of the basic ideas and values of Europe. Proud of their Europeanization, members of the elite felt they were owed respect and recognition of their individual dignity. Had they not, after all, succeeded in the difficult task of educating themselves and becoming Europeans? Consequently, they deserved to be treated like European noblemen, something the insecure and poor Russian nobleman, as we have seen, was not. This elite felt that the state should be willing to accept them as partners, rather than just as servants and executors of its will. Now that they had implemented the program that had been set for them by the state, they should be treated with respect, and their personal, cultural, and social needs should be recognized.

This implied that they should be allowed to give themselves an institutional structure enabling them not only to continue serving the state, which they were quite willing to do in the majority of instances, but also develop their own interests and enterprises and lead private lives.

In the second half of the 18th century, the government of Catherine II realized that in order to attain the goals of the well-ordered police state it was not enough to have an effective corps of officials at the center. Society (i.e., the educated and experienced members of the elite) should be involved in the process of material and cultural progress. Such an involvement, Catherine II (and her advisors, of course) believed, would be realized by means of constituted bodies of society. Catherine made it her task to promote the formation of such bodies by structuring more firmly and clearly the upper echelons of Russian society. She proceeded by giving a legal framework to the nobility, recognizing its status as a "corporation" and guaranteeing its members full security of person and property. She also involved representatives of the corporation of the nobility in the process of provincial and local administration, substituting them for an officialdom that was not large and effective enough to reach down to the level of the countryside.

Similarly, the population of the towns was classified into several groups, each one given its special legal status and a number of privileges. "Rights" is perhaps too strong a word for the benefits bestowed upon nobility and wealthier townspeople, for these benefits were in fact privileges that could be taken away as easily as they had been granted (and they were to be infringed upon by Catherine's successors), rather than rights that could always be claimed.

The state was reluctant to give these corporate bodies and their members full rights of organization and association on a completely autonomous basis. The state was afraid that autonomous corporate organizations would challenge its monopoly of power and authority by undermining the autocracy.

By the second half of the 18th century, there were emerging groups of the elite in Russian society who wanted to lead a life separate from the state, not determined by the latter's interests and commands. Such groups were formed on the basis of their members having acquired a Western type of life – this was the Russian form of civil society that demanded the right to organize its own social, institutional, and cultural life. In so doing these groups were in fact issuing a challenge to the state, implying that they would oppose the state if their demands for autonomy were not granted and implemented. This is the origin of that peculiarly Russian phenomenon of the intelligentsia, a social type that has found its imitators elsewhere in the 20th century. The intelligentsia in its original sense, therefore, is that part of Russian society – a tiny minority at first but with growing membership – that had been educated in the Western spirit at the behest of the state; because the state refused to grant them the freedoms they believed were their due, they turned against the establishment, first as a critical force and eventually as a radical oppositionist one.

If this intelligentsia no longer wanted to serve a state that refused to recognize its claims for autonomy, however, it still wanted to be useful to Russian society. Abandoning its exclusive loyalty and service to the state, it turned to the peasantry: to serve the people, to help educate and enlighten the people so that it might accede to the Westernization the intelligentsia had experienced earlier.

It is fair at this point to add that while Europeanization and modernization in the 18th century had primarily affected the noble service class, it did not leave the peasantry untouched either. Selected elements of the peasantry were drawn into the process of Europeanization. Two classes played a major role in associating the peasantry to European culture. At first it might seem a bit paradoxical that it was precisely these two that should play such a progressive role. One was the army, which had already been a "modernizing" force in 17th century Europe. Organized along rational lines, it made use of advanced technology and therefore needed a more sophisticated and developed economy to support it. More importantly, the army was the institution through which many of the rank-and-file poor nobles had experienced their own exposure to the West. A boy from the service nobility was expected to go into the army around the age of 15. If he had not acquired them at home or a special state school, he would acquire the rudiments of a Western-type education and Western way of life in the army. There he would be instructed in such things as mathematics, administrative skills, leadership qualities; he might be associated with comrades who had been educated in Western fashion; and in some instances he might even have the opportunity to go abroad on assignment or in the course of a military campaign. Having received this exposure to European notions, values, and ways, many a Russian noble serviceman tried to recreate on his estate the Western type of life he had become accustomed to in military service or the capitals.

To do so, he had to rely on his peasants. In this fashion domestic serfs found themselves forced to acquire such skills as European-style cooking or serving at table in European fashion. Insofar as even the nobleman had limited cash resources, if he wanted a Western environment, he had to have the artifacts of Western life fabricated at home. It was too expensive to purchase much from abroad, and foreign craftsmen in Russia were also beyond the reach of the average nobleman (be it only because they settled in the capitals). To produce the kind of things they wanted, noblemen trained their own peasants. Serfs were trained as cabinetmakers, painters, decorators, actors, dancers, singers, or musicians.

In this way, albeit reluctantly and under duress, select members of the peasantry became involved in the process of Westernization. Many of these skilled serfs were brought by their masters to the towns to work in their townhouses; they were also frequently given free time to practice their skills for others (friends and neighbors of the master) and also for sale (usually for their own benefit). Most frequently these serfs settled in the towns and became part of an essentially Europeanized section of the population.

While this aspect of Westernization was limited in scope, it nonetheless shows that things were changing for many peasants. However adverse to change the village community may have been, over the long run even it did change; while we do not have adequate documentation to trace this process step by step, there is no doubt that the village community in the mid-19th century was quite different from what it had been in the mid-18th. Although basic institutional arrangements and traits of peasant ways of life and thought remained unaffected, developments were taking place that gradually transformed serfdom and made its abolition inevitable.

I would like to examine still further the process of Europeanization of the elite. I have mentioned that association with the West and Central European education and ways was a major element and hallmark in the history of the Russian elite. It was also the foundation on which arose modern Russian culture: first literature (to which we all have had some exposure) including fiction and poetry, and later on music, painting, and the other arts, as well as scholarship and science. All these were the result of Russia's Europeanization in the 18th century.

It is in this respect that we find the sharpest break in the tradition; modern Russian high culture is almost totally different from the high culture of pre-Petrine Muscovy. When we examine the process of assimilation of a foreign culture – literary, artistic, technical, scientific, and political – we must keep in mind certain important features that are very often neglected. First, cultural "goods" taken over by one society from another are usually transmitted not by their originators but rather by their disciples and humble imitators. In the 18th century it was not Newton or other prominent scientists and philosophers who went to Russia; it was their students and the second rank of professionals, academics, or intellectuals who were willing to try their luck in remote and cold Russia, to impart their knowledge and skills to barbarous Muscovites.

The culture transmitted to and accepted by the new society is often, therefore, a watered-down, simplified – routinized or vulgarized – version of the original. A process of selection takes place in the transmission of ideas. In the early 18th century, Russia was exposed not to Newton or Leibniz – contemporaries of Peter I – but rather to those second-rank German academic scientists and scholars who were willing to go to Russia and who themselves had been trained a half generation earlier. They brought to Russia 17th-century deductive German philosophy and science, neglecting English empiricism, which was to prove of greater importance in the future development of natural science. Furthermore, the European ideas were presented in watered-down versions, transmitted as they were in the form of adaptations and translations rather than in the original texts.

The Western ideas and discoveries that were brought to Russia originally, therefore, were not necessarily the most important and innovative, but rather those that had become accepted and routine. Vulgarization is one of the factors of selectivity. The second aspect of selectivity derives from the ability to receive, accept, and incorporate new ideas. After all, new ideas are brought into a framework that is different, or even alien, to the framework in which they had originated. For example, the 18th-century notions of natural law, aesthetics, ethics, and politics had originated in Europe within the context of Western social structures and political institutions. They were a response to problems faced by these structures and institutions. Brought to Russia, these same ideas found themselves in a kind of vacuum: the Russians, for example, had neither a parliament nor corporate or professional traditions. Consequently, not everything was really "understandable" – not in the ordinary intellectual sense, but in any truly essential sense. Nor was everything Western important to the Russians, and they selected from the body of ideas made available to them only those that seemed relevant or interesting to their experience and purpose.

The case of liberalism is interesting because it had repercussions well into the 19th century. English and French Enlightenment ideas of society and politics were based on the notion of the individual's autonomy, his ability to use his reason and his empirical experience as a basis of his conception of the world, and therefore his right to be treated as a free individual; his intellectual and social identity should be intangible and secure against arbitrary action or trespass by the authorities. In the American Declaration of Independence or the English Bill of Rights, the individual is always the central figure. This was not readily understandable to the Russians in the 18th century, nor much of immediate concern to them, possibly because they knew that they could not challenge the autocracy and were not thinking in political terms as yet.

An even more important reason, I think, was the fact (as Professor Keenan has indicated) that Russians found themselves embedded in an all-powerful social matrix, so that individuals were never conceived as separate from the group to which they belonged. Consequently, when presented with an array of ideas about the individual's relationship to society, the French (or English) stress on individualism did not prove particularly meaningful or attractive to the Russians.

On the other hand, the Germans had developed a conception of Enlightenment which, though sharing some of the concerns of the French and the English, was more firmly rooted in the notion that the individual was inconceivable apart from society and could not be separated from the group. The Germans agreed with the French and the English that the individual does have rights, but the Germans argued that these rights were entirely dependent on the individual's fulfilling obligations to the group, to the community, and to the society. In the second place, the Germans maintained, the individuals acted not only on the basis of reason alone; they had also a religious, spiritual, and ethical dimension as well. This was something the Russians could understand and accept. They never felt that the individual meant anything alone; as the Russian proverb goes, "A single man is not a warrior in the field," he has to be with others to be really a warrior.

The relationship of the individual to the group, their mutual obligations, became the focal point of the Russians' concern in social theory and determined what they chose to select among the notions of the Enlightenment that came from the West. At the same time, their concern for the spiritual and ethical dimensions of the individual was related to their experience with serfdom. They noticed that serfdom was a threat to the ethical, as well as spiritual, integrity of both owners and serfs. For this reason, the educated elites fought for a moral and spiritual revival and reform rather than for social or political change, as had been the case in England and in France. In French writing, it was not so much Voltaire as Rousseau who attracted the Russians and elicited a responsive chorus. Paradoxically, perhaps, the Enlightenment that came in with Europeanization led the Russians to embrace eagerly Romanticism for its emphasis on the spiritual and communal, while also leading to a revival of personal religious spiritualism.

The End of Serfdom

I mentioned earlier that the state's refusal to permit full autonomy to the educated elite turned the latter against the state. Still imbued with the values of service, the elite – rebuffed by the state – decided to put their knowledge and talents to the service of the people. The task of the intelligentsia became, then, to serve the peasantry, to free them from serfdom while regenerating them materially and morally.

This raised a question: Who were the people and what did the intelligentsia really know about them? In a sense, not much. The people were the peasants, about 95 percent of the population. Neither the state nor the landlord had been eager to interfere with the ways and practices of the village commune; they preferred to leave it in peace as long as there was order in the countryside and its members were performing their tasks and meeting their obligations. The elite, busy appropriating Western education and culture, found no time to be concerned with the peasants. To find out what the peasantry was like, what were its real condition and true needs, was a taxing and not very rewarding enterprise, they seemed to feel. Most intellectuals soon tired of the practical problems they encountered on their path of learning more about the peasantry.

Instead of coming to know and to communicate with the peasantry, the elite preferred fantasizing about them – at least until the middle of the 19th century. They transferred onto the people notions of their own, notions which they had found either in Western literature or had created themselves on the basis of their own reflections on moral, intellectual, and spiritual questions. They came to believe that to help the people, one really needed only to change the system, to overthrow the government that prevented them from getting to know the people. Such attitudes, obviously, led to a lot of misunderstandings. First, the state grew suspicious of the intelligentsia's proposing changes on ideological grounds rather than on the basis of empirical knowledge and realistic assessment of needs and possibilities. The people, on the other hand, could not respond to the intelligentsia's notions and propaganda because they did not understand them.

The government finally decided to put an end to serfdom in 1861 because it was morally unacceptable to the West and the educated elite, because it was an economic handicap, and because it was socially dangerous. The government acted on the basis of extensive study and empirical investigation of conditions in the countryside.

The emancipation initiated a process of development that was the reverse of what had been happening until then. Up to 1861 (using the date symbolically), the state had been the leader in the Europeanization and modernization of the country, crowning this role by the act of emancipation and a series of other fundamental reforms (local government, justice, military). From this moment on, the initiative of modernization gradually passed to society at large. With the abolition of serfdom, large numbers of peasants were free to take initiatives and become masters of their own lives (in spite of the many deficiencies and constraints of the emancipation settlement).

A radical transformation in peasant culture was initiated partly by the peasants themselves, partly under the stimulus of the educated elite. For the first time, educated Russians were finding a way to be useful to the people by becoming professionals in medicine, education, agriculture, and so on. A rapidly growing sector of Russian society was getting more and more involved in the professions of service. This development, however, was escaping control by the state, which resisted and tried to restrict it as much as possible. The consequence was a growing conflict between the professionals and the state.

After 1861, the autocracy retained control and claimed to have the monopoly of political authority, but it had lost the initiative of modernization. The peasantry was undergoing transformations whose consequences Professor Ascher discusses in his chapter. On the other hand, the educated class—professionals and intelligentsia—was finding itself more and more frustrated in its desire to serve the people.

Partly rejected by the people and partly stymied by the various controls that the autocracy was endeavoring to maintain, educated civil society was becoming more and more radical. There developed a struggle between two static poles, each aiming at the complete elimination of the other: the autocracy wanted to eliminate the intelligentsia, the intelligentsia strove to topple the autocracy. No compromise solution seemed possible. When external factors contributed to weakening the autocracy to such an extent that it could no longer control the situation, the whole system collapsed and the Old Regime disintegrated.

Other Factors

I would like to make two additions to the picture I have traced. One relates to religion and the church, the other to the non-Russian populations of the empire.

Peter I eliminated the church as an independent or autonomous institutional force. He did not abolish religion by any means, but the church was integrated into the government establishment. This meant two things: first, the Old Believers who did not accept the earlier reforms carried out by the church in the middle of the 17th century were now seen as a danger to the state, and the government attempted to suppress them, persecuting them in a number of ways. However, these efforts failed and the Old Believers, about a quarter of the population, remained a hard-core minority that reluctantly acquiesced to the existence of the state, but avoided associating with it, for fear of losing eternal bliss in the hereafter. The religious culture prevailing among Russian people before Peter I was carried on by the Old Believers, but it became frozen in its 17th-century state. As a result, not only was the Europeanized elite disassociated from the mass of the population, as noted earlier, but a hard-core minority of the population remained rigidly rooted in preserving 17th-century culture. These latter elements came to the fore again in the late 19th century when the imperial regime relaxed somewhat its repressive attitudes. What we often associate with Russian popular culture today is in fact Old Believer culture, an adapted form of 17th-century tradition.

A second aspect of the church problem in imperial Russia was the fact that the most active spiritual and religious life of both the people and educated elite took place outside the framework of the institutional official church, although not against it. You may think of it as similar to the relationship between the Anglican Church of Hanoverian England and the various nonconforming churches (Methodist, Presbyterian, etc.). In Russia the religious and moral seekings were independent of the official church; the church was primarily a tool of the state, with little moral and intellectual standing in Russian society. The Russians did not stop being religious, and their piety was never affected (they were diligent church-goers, for example), but they did not look to the official church or its clergy for guidance and the satisfaction of their inner spiritual needs. For this reason, too, the revival of religious and ecclesiastic concerns at the end of the 19th century became the business of the laity.

The second additional point I want to touch upon relates to the situation of the non-Russian peoples of the empire. When I spoke of the army as a central concern of Peter I and his successors, I did not mention that the modernized military force was not developed primarily for reasons of defense. Russia's security was not threatened in the 18th and 19th centuries, with the exception of the very short-lived Napoleonic invasion; no neighbor could challenge the empire's security, national survival, or even its territorial integrity from the end of the 17th century until the 20th. Clearly Russia was not a beleaguered country needing a big military establishment for its defense. Whatever may have been the case in the 15th and 16th centuries when Muscovy was asserting itself, it was no longer true of the empire in the 18th and 19th centuries. Even the war against Sweden (1700-21), which is very often described as a defensive establishment – also an agent for Westernization, as we recall – was needed mainly for the ongoing expansion of the empire. In the 18th century, Russia acquired the Baltic provinces, Finland, the whole of the modern Ukraine, and the Crimea and participated in the partitions of Poland, where it got the lion's share. It conquered the Caucasus and Central Asia in the 19th century.

After empire-building, the army's second mission was to keep domestic peace and order, especially in the 18th century, when it was called upon to suppress numerous revolts of Cossacks, natives, and peasants. In the 19th century, however, domestic peace was threatened but occasionally, and until the 20th century, the army did not have to get much involved.

From the middle of the 16th century and well into the 19th, Russia not only extended its boundaries but conquered and absorbed non-Russian peoples and their territory. How well did the imperial government deal with this situation as a colonial power? Quite successfully, at least until the end of the 19th century; the colonial character of the Russian empire was never seriously threatened. First, of course, the Russian establishment had overwhelming superiority of military force. Secondly, we must remember that nationalism as a form of feeling and thinking that entails independence or at the least a recognition of autonomous special status is a modern conception. Nationalism as we know it is a phenomenon of the 19th century; earlier forms, which one of my colleagues called "pre-national consciousness" were not nationalism in the modern sense.

Before the 19th century, Europeans, and Russians too, were imperial subjects and did not think in terms of ethnicity or nationality. They may have thought in terms of religious differences, or of certain historical rights and privileges that they wished to see recognized within a corporate or dynastic framework. Moreover, Russia was an empire-state in constant need of servitors to control the large territory and maintain a powerful military establishment, of men capable of acquiring all necessary skills and knowledge to this end. In Russia proper limits were set to the expansion of the establishment by the small number of Russians available for service and by the restricted opportunities for education. The peasantry could not be drawn upon, and there were no other alternative sources for recruitment. But some elites of subject nations might be used to control their fellow nationals and secure outlying regions. To this end, they were coopted into the Russian service establishment; they were rewarded with ranks and decorations and elevated to noble status.

From the 16th century on, Muscovy, and later the Russian state, pursued a consistent policy of coopting the leadership of the subject peoples, especially of those who could be readily attracted by the Europeanized culture of modern Russia. It was advantageous for them and their children to learn the Russian language and acquire Russian culture; gradually, these foreign elites were Russified and absorbed into the Russian establishment and society. They did not have to become Russian Orthodox, although it was desirable to do so in the long run; nor did they have to abandon their language and even some of their legal and social traditions.

For the peoples on a much higher level of cultural sophistication – namely in the Baltic provinces, Finland, the Ukraine, and Poland – the Russian empire had the inducements of fast promotion in the service establishments and economic rewards. These elites, too, coopted and rewarded, gradually became Russified without, however, losing their original culture; as a consequence, the 19th century witnessed the phenomenon of bilingual, bicultural, and sometimes polytheistic imperial elites. For example, a prominent minister of the empire could be of Protestant background and practice Greek Orthodoxy, speak German at home and Russian in public, thus being both German and Russian in his cultural life. To a lesser degree, this also happened among Poles, Finns, and others. This was one way of keeping the empire under control so that the government forgot, or might ignore, the dynamite hidden in the national consciousness of the various subject peoples.

It was only under the influence of Romanticism, largely disseminated by the Russians themselves, that the national problem arose and became critical. The imperial government proved incapable of coping with this new phenomenon in the traditional manner and had recourse to repression and Russification by force. Of course this policy boomeranged and the state lost the loyalty and obedience of the non-Russian population. It was another and significant factor in the collapse of the imperial system in the early 20th century.

RUSSIAN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY TO 1917: AN INTRODUCTION

by Richard Wortman

The field of intellectual history is not easy to define, for its practitioners understand it in different ways. Some approach it as the study of the evolution of important ideas through history. They take what we call an "internalist" approach – that is, one that follows the development of ideas in connection with each other rather than in relationship to changes in politics, society, or economy. The scholar may examine the thought of Descartes, Leibniz, Hume, Kant, and Hegel and trace controversies over major philosophical questions, say the idea of reason. Or he may seek to explain the meaning of certain important ideas, for example, Kant's categorical imperative, or Marx's idea of surplus value.

This is not what I mean by intellectual history. Intellectual history as I understand it is the study of the interaction between thought and society: it is the study of how people have used ideas. Intellectual historians examine how ideas affect, and how they in turn are affected by, political and social change. Of course, intellectual historians must have a sense of what Kant meant by the categorical imperative and Marx by surplus value. Their main concerns, however, will be how these ideas were understood and what role they played in the great movements of the modern era – liberalism and socialism.

Intellectual history is particularly important for the historian of Russia. In Russia, the social groups that dominated politics in the West – the nobility and the bourgeoisie – were extremely weak and left the realm of politics to thinkers and writers. As a result, thought played a central role in Russian political life, shaping attitudes and the motivations to political action. The study of Russian history must include an examination of how the men making that history thought and how they conceived of the world.

In this respect, as in so many others, Russia's experience has been the opposite of our own. Since the early 19th century, ideas have had relatively little influence on U.S. politics, and writers and thinkers have played a secondary role. Politicians and businessmen have been the principal agents in our history. William Faulkner once said that Americans treat writers like pet dogs – they are nice to have around, but do not deserve great respect. In Europe, writers play a great political role, especially in Eastern Europe; in Russia, the eastern extreme of Europe, their role has been immense. The poet Andrei Voznesenskii declared at the June 1986 Congress of the Union of Writers, "By the will of fate, it may be that we are the last country in the world that reads."

To understand Russia, in this, as in so many other respects, we must make a conceptual leap – to try to understand a culture completely different from our own. In Russia, writers have been saints and prophets, worshipped and followed. When Soviets defend the limitations on thought and the printed word, they often point to the fact that in Russia thought is a challenge and even a menace to authority. What I write, and what you read, is not of great significance to the governors of New Jersey or New York, or the leaders of the Democratic or Republican Parties. What Russians read or write is of enormous significance to the leadership of the Communist Party. In Russia the printed word is a force. So it is today, so it was a century ago. Alexander Herzen wrote in 1851:

> The camp hostile to official Russia consists of a handful of men, ready to face anything, who protest against it, fight against it, denounce and undermine it. These isolated champions are from time to time thrown into dungeons, tortured and sent to Siberia, but their place is not long vacant – fresh champions arise. It is our tradition, our inalienable inheritance. The terrible consequences of the human word in Russia inevitably lend it a peculiar force. The voice of freedom is listened to with love and reverence, because only those who have something to say raise it. One does not so easily put one's thought into print when every page seems to conjure up a vision of a gendarme, a troika, and some Tobolsk or Irkutsk in immediate prospect.[1]

From the point of view of the intellectual historian, ideas assume historical meaning when they enter particular settings. They do not have historical meaning outside their settings. In Russia, political, social, and cultural settings defined how ideas were understood and used; I would like to begin by characterizing each.

The Political Setting

As Professor Raeff has shown in his essay, Westernization was imposed upon Russia by Russian emperors and empresses. Peter the Great's reforms forced European dress and culture on the Russian social elite. This does not mean that high culture in Russia began only with Peter. Historians and literary specialists now are well aware of the rich cultural heritage of medieval Russia. However, there was little Western culture in Russia before Peter the Great. Peter forcibly introduced Western governmental institutions, military techniques, and manners. Though he rebelled against the culture of old Russia, he himself had little interest in the culture of the West. Peter wrote laws, navigated boats, practiced carpentry, even pulled teeth, but he was little interested in literature and philosophy. The noted authority Dmitrij Tschizewskij wrote that in Peter's reign, "Russian literature ceased to exist."[2] As for thought, the most interesting texts of Peter's reign are the government decrees. Isolated figures like Ivan Pososhkov, who wrote on political economy, the Metropolitan Feofan Protopopov, and the historian Vasilii Tatishchev deserve attention, but they were not men of significant stature and hardly constituted an intellectual or cultural life.

The rulers of Russia after Peter worked to fill the cultural vacuum he had left. The Empress Elizabeth (1741–62) introduced Western theater and music. Her reign saw the beginning of a Russian theater at the Noble Cadet's Corps, and Russia's first serious playwright, Alexander Sumarokov, who wrote tragedies in the neoclassical manner of Corneille and Racine. Elizabeth ordered the translation of books, whose "usefulness and amusing qualities are combined with moral teachings, suitable for public life." In her reign, Western novels first reached Russia in significant numbers.

The Empress Catherine (1762–96) extended Westernization to the realm of ideas. In the words of the poet Michael Kheraskov, "Peter gave Russians bodies, Catherine gave them souls." Catherine was a German princess who came to the throne after a coup against her husband, the Emperor Peter III, whom she quickly executed. Possessing no title to rule, she justified her authority by claiming to rule through law. She convened a Legislative Commission in 1767 to codify the laws, and her Instruction to the Commission, borrowed from Montesquieu and Beccaria, set forth the enlightened principles she wished the delegates to the Commission to follow. The Commission did not complete its task of codification, but Catherine's Instruction remained a major influence upon educated Russians for the next century.

Catherine's Instruction was a sweeping statement of enlightened absolutism. It set forth the hope of a humane and equal system of justice and the abolition of torture. One article—Article Six—was especially important for the definition of the identity of the Russian state and educated Russians in subsequent decades. Article Six declared, "Russia is a European State." So the Empress declared; so the educated nobility thought of Russia and themselves. The assumption that Russia was a European state governed Russian thought until the third decade of the 19th century. In addition to the Instruction, Catherine started her own journal, which contained many of her own satirical articles, written in the manner of Addison and Steele. She wrote plays, educational primers, and even a history text.

To summarize, the political setting of Russian intellectual history in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was the court of the emperors and empresses. Westernization was led by an enlightened monarch who served as both cultural model and ruler.

The Social Setting

Russian thought evolved primarily among the Russian nobility in this period. Noblemen were the first to receive a European education and the opportunity for cultural contacts with the West. The nobility would continue to dominate Russian thought and culture down to the Revolution of 1917.

The Russian nobility, as we know it in the 19th century, was brought into being by Peter the Great. It was defined by service to the state. Though nobility could be hereditary, all noblemen were obliged to serve either in the military or civil service. Even after the abolition of obligatory service in 1762, noblemen continued to serve, and their status, in most cases, continued to be determined by the level they had reached in the service hierarchy.

Service shaped the nobility's view of the world. Noblemen shared a service ethos that made the state the purpose of their efforts, whether on the battlefield or in government office. In this context, pursuit of private profit was not a norm. The Russian nobleman justified himself as working for something above himself, for a superordinate entity that strove for the good of all. Of course, this does not mean that Russian noblemen were selfless or devoid of greed—quite the contrary. Many of them were bestial in their exploitation of their serfs and extremely enterprising at enriching themselves at the expense of the treasury. Yet private enrichment never came to be regarded as a social virtue, as it did in the bourgeois West. The Russian nobility in the 18th century justified themselves by serving the state. In the 19th century, noblemen disenchanted with the autocracy would devote themselves instead to the service of the people.

Peter equated noble status with Western culture, just as he made nobility depend on service. Before Peter, there was little cultural distinction between the upper and lower classes. Peter introduced a Western concept of "nobility." He contrasted the noble, well-born *blagorodnyi*, with the base, *podlyi*. The nobleman was supposed to act like a

European aristocrat, not like a Russian peasant; the higher the nobleman stood in the social hierarchy, the more European he was supposed to behave. There came into existence what I call "the Petrine equation," Nobility = State Service = Europeanization. The Tables of Ranks, which Peter introduced in the various branches of imperial service, attached the extent of luxury and Western appearance of the nobleman to the level he had reached in the service: the best dressed and the most European stood highest in the state and closest to the emperor.

Peter made it necessary for the nobleman to dress as a European, to live in European-style houses with European furnishings, and to observe European etiquette. Catherine introduced an even greater demand: she insisted that Russian noblemen begin to think and write like Europeans. If Peter was the artisan-tsar, Catherine was the *philosophe* on the throne. Russian noblemen would begin to observe European intellectual fashion, just as they observed European fashions in dress and furniture.

Cultural Setting

Russia confronted the West in the 18th century without experiencing the long cultural evolution that produced European civilization. Educated Russians lacked the background and many of the central assumptions of the culture they were embracing. As a result, they understood the values and the heritage of the West quite differently from those reared within the Western tradition. The culture of the West came to Russia from above – from the autocracy – and it came suddenly, as an imposition, a command to adopt new attitudes and tastes, after a long period of isolation.

When Russia turned to the West, Europe had already undergone the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, and extensive economic change that had not reached Russia. Russia approached the West almost as a blank slate. The extent of Russia's cultural isolation becomes clear from an examination of circumstances of the evolution of two of the central institutions of European intellectual development – the printing press and the university.

There had been printing presses in Russia since the 16th century, but all had been state-owned, like the present-day Soviet press. In 1762, there was no private printing press in Russia, and all publication was under the jurisdiction of either the state or the church. Catherine the Great allowed Nicholas Novikov to start a printing press at Moscow University, beginning a late and weak tradition of private publication. Independent publishing started late in Russia and would lead a parlous existence under a suspicious and powerful state. The very existence of a private sphere lacked a tradition of acceptance and moral viability in the Russian past.

Universities, too, came late to Russia and lacked a tradition of independence from the state. The first Russian university, Moscow University, was established in 1755. In its first decades, moreover, the student body remained very small and did not rise far above 100 students until the 19th century. Russia's experience with higher education, as a result, was relatively recent. Most major European universities date from the Middle Ages. For comparison, the University of Paris was founded in the 12th century, Heidelberg in 1386. In Eastern Europe, Prague was founded in 1348, and Cracow in 1365.

Since the European university had its origins in the church, it enjoyed a tradition of independence from secular authorities. The Russian university was founded under state auspices, with a secular curriculum geared to producing Westernized servants of the state. During the 19th and 20th centuries, Russian universities strove to achieve the autonomy of their Western models, but they too had to rely on the sufferance of political authorities and had no history of independence to justify their claims.

The absence of a tradition of university education in Russia had great importance for the reception of Western thought. When Russia turned to the West in the 18th century, it was out of touch with three major intellectual traditions of the West:

1. The study of philosophy. In the West, philosophy had developed among the fathers of the Roman Catholic Church and centered in the universities. The Russian Orthodox Church did not encourage philosophical speculation. As a result, Russia experienced nothing like the reception of Aristotle in the Middle Ages, the spread of neo-Thomism and scholasticism. In the West, contact with the Arab world brought knowledge of Aristotle and a period of intellectual ferment. The Mongols, who themselves were more backward than Russia, could have no such impact. In Pushkin's words, "The Mongols were Arabs without Aristotle or Algaebra."

Russian thinkers started late in the study of philosophy and had to struggle to come to terms with the philosophical legacy of the West. Many of them lacked an understanding of the basic philosophical presuppositions and modes of thinking of speculative philosophy. This led Nicholas Berdyaev to write of the "philosophical illiteracy" of Russian thought. The state's domination of the university also inhibited the growth of philosophical learning. In the 19th century, the leaders of the autocratic state regarded philosophy as the bearer of subversive ideas and discouraged, and at times prohibited, its teaching at the university. Academic philosophy as a result had a troubled history in Russia and began to flower only at the very end of the 19th century.

2. The study of law. In the West, formal study of law also began in the universities, where scholars studied the Roman law and particularly the Justinian code. European monarchs drew upon their expertise to provide the legal grounds to extend their own authority against the obstacles of feudal right. In Russia, which had no tradition of feudal law, the tsar did not require extensive legal justification of his authority. The study of the law came late to Russia, when 18th century emperors and empresses tried to shape institutions on the basis of one or another notion of law. In Russia, law continued to represent something distant, foreign, and Russian thinkers would struggle to explain its meaning for the Russian experience. In their writings, law took on abstract, often-utopian meanings. The historian of Russian religion, George Fedotov wrote, "The Russian is either above law or below it – never or rarely capable of appreciating law for its own value, as an ethical minimum, or as a necessary mediation between the kingdom of God and the animal struggle for life."[3]

3. The study of Western literature. Study of Western literature, and particularly the classical heritage, began in Russia during the 18th century. The great works of antiquity came from Europe, often in French or German translations. Their meaning and importance were understood within the European cultural context. The classics were appreciated within the framework of European neoclassicism, and then sentimentalism, receiving the social and political overtones of these literary schools. Adopted as one aspect of Westernization, literature became a part of the nobleman's European self-definition. He embraced Western literary forms and feeling but never felt quite at ease with them. Madame de Stael sensed this uncertainty on her visit to Russia during the early 19th century:

> Several Russian gentlemen tried to shine in literature and have shown some talent in this career; but the light has not spread so far that there is a public judgment formed out of the opinion of each. The character of the Russians is too passionate to like thoughts that are in the least abstract; only facts amuse them. They have not yet had the time or the taste to reduce facts to general ideas. Besides all significant thought is more or less dangerous in the midst of a court where one observes and is being observed and where, most often, one is simply covetous.
>
> The silence of the East is transformed into agreeable words, but words that do not usually penetrate to the depth of things . . .[4]

Mme de Stael's remark about Russian indifference to abstract thought may strike us as strange when we think of Russian intellectuals later in the 19th century engaging in endless philosophical discussions. Yet in a sense, her characterization remained correct. Russians engaged in philosophical discussions later in the century, but they lacked the philosophical and intellectual groundwork of Europe, and their philosophical discussions were about specific ethical problems. One of the striking characteristics of Russian thought in the 19th and 20th centuries was its preeminently ethical orientation. Russian thinkers dealt predominantly with problems of human action: how one should act, or what one should do. Abstract and academic questions, of epistemology and metaphysics, were almost ignored until the end of the 19th century. This explains why such philosophers as Kant and Hume had little following in Russia until the early 20th century, while others like Hegel and Marx, who provided prescriptions for action, wielded enormous influence.

Thought was expected to give answers, to reveal the truth. "Truth" was a favorite word of 19th-century Russian intellectuals. The Russian word for truth is, of course, *pravda*. *Pravda* also means justice. It carries some of the ambiguities of the English noun "right." Truth was the equivalent of an ethical absolute, and Russian intellectuals believed that what was cognitively right was necessarily linked with what was ethically right. The populist writer Nicholas Mikhailovskii wrote, "Every time I think of the word *pravda* I cannot help admiring its striking inner beauty. Apparently there is no word like it in any European language. Only in Russian, it seems, are truth and justice designated by the same word and fused, as it were, into one great whole."[5]

Thought in Russia had existential significance: it provided answers to personal as well as political predicaments by giving intellectuals answers to the questions of who they were and why they lived. Western thought became a replacement for orthodox religion, which after the Westernization of the 18th century lost much of its influence among the nobility. Russian intellectuals in the 19th century became involved in a search for religion-substitutes, doctrines that showed them the way to virtue and redemption. This orientation led writers like Nicholas Berdyaev to write of the messianic character of Russian thought, which became a search for salvation on earth in the realm of thought.

The writings of Russian intellectuals describe a quest for definition, whether personal, social, or national self-definition. This quest involved the great figures of 19th-century literature. Writers like Tolstoy and Dostoevsky become comprehensible only within this historical context; to read their works for purely literary or philosophical values is to disregard the questions they were addressing and the intellectual ambience that was their main point of reference. Indeed, their readers among the Russian intelligentsia looked for the authors' answers to these questions, for they believed that literature as well as thought had to deal in ethical imperatives. The notion of "art for art's sake" had few followers in Russia. The Russian public sought in literature both a description of life as it was and a prescription for life as it should be. The characters of Russian drama and fiction became models they tried to emulate.

Russian intellectuals sought answers to these questions in the thought of the West. They did not create new doctrines but tried to apply the dominant doctrines of Europe to Russian reality. They made few truly significant contributions to the history of thought. Their achievement rather was to adapt European doctrines to Russian needs. It is for this reason that we speak of the highly derivative character of Russian thought.

This is not to suggest that their contributions were unoriginal. Russian thinkers used Western doctrines to answer the specific ethical questions troubling them and in so doing transformed these doctrines to suit purposes quite different from their original intent. Terms, concepts, goals, and feelings changed in the process of borrowing. Idealism, positivism, Marxism, Nietzschianism, were refashioned in a way that made the Russian versions almost unrecognizable variants of the original, similar in form, but transformed in spirit.

New Currents

By the end of the 18th century, the culture of Russia's ruling elite had become European in character. Two premises ruled this culture. First was that Russia was a European state to which European theories were applicable. Differences observed between Russia and the West, it was thought, reflected different stages of historical development and would disappear as Russia progressed. The second premise was that the monarch, the champion of Westernization, the most European of the elite, would lead the political and economic development of the nation.

During the first decades of the 19th century, these premises lost their force. Two occurrences, both traumatic in their impact, made clear to many educated Russians that Russia was essentially different from the West and that the emperor no longer could be looked to as the leader of progressive change.

The Decembrist Rebellion dealt the first blow to the old way of thinking. After their victorious struggle against Napoleon, liberal guards officers returned to find a period of reaction in Russia. Tsar Alexander had raised their hopes for constitutional reforms early in his reign. After 1815, however, he adopted increasingly obscurantist policies. The officers first organized secret groups, then planned an uprising, following the example of the insurrections in Naples and Spain in 1820. On December 14, 1825, in the midst of the confusion following Alexander I's death, a group of officers led their soldiers out onto the Senate square in St. Petersburg and demanded a constitution. The new emperor, Nicholas I, crushed the rebellion and ushered in a period of political conservatism and police repression. Russia became the policeman of Europe, the hated foe of all liberal forces, the defender of thrones.

At this point, the emperor ceased to lead the nation in Westernization, which now implied constitutional reform. Beginning with Nicholas I, all Russian emperors intransigently opposed constitutional concessions. Once the emperor ceased to be the ethical leader of the Westernized nobility, ideas began to work against, rather than for, the autocracy. Intellectuals began to look for new leaders and guides who could return Russia to the path of progress.

The second major development of the early 19th century was the reception of philosophical idealism from Germany. German philosophy, particularly the writings of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, spread the notion that each country had its own essence, its own idea that informed its identity. Idealistic philosophy posed the question of Russia's national identity. The failure of the Decembrist revolution, in addition, broke the easy identification between Russia and Europe in the minds of many liberal Russians. European ideas did not seem so easily applicable to Russia. If Article Six of Catherine's Instruction was mistaken, if Russia was not a European state, then what was Russia?

This question was posed in what was probably the most important document of 19th-century Russian intellectual history, Peter Chaadaev's Philosophical Letter. Chaadaev himself was an elegant nobleman, a guards officer and adjutant of the tsar. He was a friend of Pushkin and many of the Decembrists. At a certain point, he underwent a conversion. He went to Europe and studied Schelling and became deeply involved in questions of theology and historical destiny. His letter articulated two questions that all Russian intellectuals would struggle to answer.

1. The question of Russia's national identity. Was Russia, and its historical destiny, like the West, or did Russia have a distinctive past, and therefore future? Since Chaadaev's presuppositions were drawn from idealist philosophy, he sought answers in ideas, in thought. After him, Russian intellectuals would continue to seek answers in thought in Western journals and books.

2. The question of ethically acceptable action, once conduct could no longer be validated by the principle of state service. If obedience to the tsarist state no longer fit the imperative of service to a higher goal and the principle of the West, what course of action was justifiable? The Russian nobleman's role had been defined in political terms, by his service to the state. Those who threw off that role continued to seek political definitions of ethical behavior: they endeavored to serve society by working to change the political order.

The Intelligentsia

In the 1830s and 1840s, the group we refer to as "the Russian intelligentsia" was born. Its members strove to answer these crucial, so-called "accursed" questions. Students at Moscow University, most of them noblemen, began to struggle with these questions and to engage in interminable intellectual debates about the nature of Russia's destiny. It was a period of discovery and awakening, of trying to determine what in the Western heritage could be relevant to Russia, and what in Russia's heritage should be salvaged for the future.

How can we define the term "intelligentsia"? This is a difficult problem, since it is a Russian word that came into usage to designate a specific historical group. We *can* point to its most important distinguishing feature: the Russian intelligentsia was a group made up of individuals who repudiated their social and political backgrounds and defined their future roles in terms of ideas. They found nothing in the existing system acceptable in terms of the ideas they had absorbed from their education.

1. They identified the state, which most of them had expected to serve, with a bureaucratic despotism and the loss of all impulse to progressive political change.

2. They condemned the nobility, to which most of them belonged by birth, for living off the serfs and serving the state that maintained the system of serfdom.

3. They placed little hope in the small and weak Russian bourgeoisie, which was backward and dependent upon the state and, until the 20th century, did not represent a force for change.

The members of the intelligentsia themselves sought to replace the tsar by becoming the collective leader of the nation. They based their title to this role on their possession of the truth, their consciousness of the laws taught by reason and the direction of historical change. Influenced by the philosophy of Hegel, they believed that the idea unfolded through history and that the current system of tyranny and injustice was bound to give way to the triumph of the idea.

They found the key to these ideas in books and journals, which they received from the West. They engaged in fierce controversies about the lessons of Western thought for Russia. These debates shaped Russian political life down to the revolution of 1917. Politics in pre-revolutionary Russia took ideological forms; the principal political leaders until the revolution of 1905 were intellectuals. Russian political life represented the extreme of the ideological politics characteristic of the continent. We can see this process at work in the two major controversies that dominated Russian intellectual life in 19th- and early 20th-century Russia.

Slavophiles and Westernizers

The Slavophile-Westernizer debate took place in the Moscow of the 1840s among the young intellectuals we generally refer to as the first generation of the Russian intelligentsia. Most of these intellectuals were noblemen who frequented the aristocratic salons of Moscow and engaged in the lengthy discussions of philosophy and literature so beautifully described in the works of Turgenev. They addressed themselves first to the crucial question of Russia's national identity and destiny originally raised by Chaadaev. What path would Russia follow?

The Westernizers, who included such leading figures of Russian radical thought as Alexander Herzen, Vissarion Belinskii, Michael Bakunin, and Ivan Turgenev, were convinced that Russia's path would converge with the West's. They did not hold the 18th-century notion that Russia was qualitatively the same as the West. Rather, they believed that Russia had the capacity to realize the most advanced ideas produced by Western thinkers. They were convinced that Russia's backwardness would permit its intellectual leaders to transform Russian reality according to the most advanced ideas of European social thought. They looked to socialist doctrines to free the individual from the despotism of the state, superstition, and injustice. This viewpoint receives an eloquent statement in Belinskii's *Letter to Gogol*, which expresses the faith in the progressive nature of the Russian people and the role its writers could play as leaders.

The Slavophiles found Russia's distinctive character not in its susceptibility to Western ideas, but in a national identity rooted in Russia's past. Chaadaev had denied that Russia had its own spiritual heritage, its own idea; the Slavophiles found the Russian idea in orthodox religion and the Russian Orthodox Church. Influenced by the teachings of Schelling, they sought an original historical era when the national idea was revealed in 17th-century Muscovy. They imagined a unity of the Russian people with their tsar before Westernization had divided the nation. While the Westernizers looked toward increasing freedom of the individual in Russia, the Slavophiles idealized the collective spirit of the Russian people, which they thought resided in the Orthodox Church and the peasant commune. Yet like the Westernizers, they believed that Russia's national identity was only a potentiality. They believed that the Russians of their time, like themselves, had been alienated from their true nature by the influence of the West. They looked toward a historical evolution that would enable Russia to recapture her true collective, orthodox spirit.

We can summarize their attitudes in the chart at the bottom of the page.

Populists and Marxists

The debates of the Slavophiles and the Westernizers remained very much in the realm of theory. Action in behalf of ideas became possible only with the reign of Alexander II (1855-81) and the era of the Great Reforms. The reforms, accompanied by unprecedented freedom to express varied viewpoints, awakened hopes for far-reaching transformations of Russia. Slavophile ideas influenced many of the liberal movements for change at this time. The impact of the Westernizers was evident in both liberal and radical thought and particularly the ideology of the populist movement.

The greatest and most significant of Alexander II's reforms, the emancipation of the serfs from bondage, disappointed the more radical members of the intelligentsia. The emancipation settlement deprived the peasants of much of the land they had farmed before 1861 and burdened them with heavy redemption payments that were used to compensate their lords. In addition, autocratic government persisted, and the tsar resisted all efforts to introduce even limited forms of public participation.

At this time the noble members of the intelligentsia were joined by large numbers of intellectual youths from other classes – the *raznochintsy*, or persons of different ranks. The *raznochintsy* usually came from poor backgrounds; they were sons of priests, petty bureaucrats, artisans, even peasants who had left their hereditary estates to seek their fortunes in the cities of Russia. Many of them joined the ranks of the intelligentsia. Some of their number, like Nicholas Chernyshevsky and Nicholas Dobroliubov, became important figures in the history of Russian radicalism.

The dominant ideology of the radical intelligentsia from the 1860s was populism. Evolving out of the writings of the Westernizers, Herzen, Belinskii, and Bakunin, populism was an effort to devise a socialism suitable for Russia, a peasant socialism. The word populism is a literal translation of the word *narodnichestvo* "people-ism." Russian populism did not closely resemble the populism of the West, which usually referred to a popular, agrarian movement. Russian populism was a movement of members of the intelligentsia, who turned to the peasantry for a source of hope and support in the future.

Though most of the central precepts of populism came from the Westernizer scheme, populist ideology was an amalgam of Westernizer and Slavophile ideas. This synthesis was the achievement of Alexander Herzen at the beginning of the 1850s. Herzen, like all of the Westernizers, had believed in the leading role of the intelligentsia in bringing progressive European ideas to Russia. After leaving Russia for Europe, he witnessed his hopes for a democratic and socialist future crushed during the revolution of 1848. The experience undermined his faith in the revolutionary potentialities of Western society and at the same time led him to look back more fondly on his native land.

The stimulus to formulate his views came from the famous French democratic historian, Jules Michelet. Michelet had attacked Russia for suppressing progressive movements everywhere in Europe. For Michelet, Russia was no more than the

Influence	History	Philosophical Principle	Society
Westernizers: Hegel	Progress	Rationalism	Liberal or Socialist
Slavophiles: Schelling	National Past	Religious Faith	Collectivist

policeman of Europe. "Russians are not human," he wrote. "They lack any moral sense."

Such words aroused the national pride of Herzen, who answered with an indignant open letter to Michelet. Herzen's 1851 letter drew a distinction between Russia and the Russian people. The Russian people were not represented by the Russian state, which oppressed them as well as the peoples of Europe. Herzen pointed to two vital political forces in Russia: (1) the intelligentsia, who fought with the weapon of the word, and (2) the Russian people or, more specifically, the peasantry. Herzen took a leaf from the Slavophile's book in looking to the peasant commune, the *mir*, as a source of Russia's rejuvenation. While the Slavophiles discovered a moral and religious ideal in the commune, Herzen saw it as an embryo of a socialist society. He wrote to Michelet:

> The Russian peasant has no morality except that which naturally, instinctively, derives from his communism. This morality is deeply rooted in the people; the little they know of the Gospel supports it; the flagrant injustice of the landowner binds the peasant still more closely to his principles and to the communal system.
>
> The commune has saved the Russian people from Mongol barbarism and imperial civilization, from the Europeanized landlords and the German bureaucracy. The communal system, though shattered, has withstood the interference of the authorities; it has successfully survived to see the development of socialism in Europe.[6]

The unity of the intelligentsia and the people was the central principle of Russian populism. By joining with the people, the intelligentsia hoped to be able to proceed directly to socialism, which, they expected, would soon triumph in the West. Russia would thus bypass the stage of capitalism, avoiding what they regarded as the injustice of a system that subjected man to the exploitation and dehumanization of factory life. But Russia could bypass capitalism only if the social revolution took place before capitalism became the dominant system of production there as well. These ideas, set forth by Herzen and Nicholas Chernyshevsky, thus had a sense of urgency that led members of the radical intelligentsia to seek to unleash a social revolution quickly in Russia.

Note that the populists expected a social rather than political revolution in Russia. They were radicals eager to proceed to a socialist society and did not trouble themselves with the attainment of political liberties and constitutional forms of government, which they associated with the discredited bourgeois stage of history. Liberal thought was weakly developed in Russia and did not become a serious force until the early 20th century. As a result, in the 1870s, the revolutionary populists virtually ignored the existence of the tsarist state, which they expected to topple of its own weight once the social structure supporting it was overthrown.

Populism thus provided one solution to the question raised by Chaadaev. It presented a Western perspective on Russia's national development. Populist theorists and their followers envisioned the realization of the highest ideals of European social development by uniting with the peasantry and organizing a social revolution. Once the revolution was achieved, Russia would no longer be regarded as more backward than the West or be alienated from the course of Western historical development, which Chaadaev feared was Russia's national identity. By assuming the leadership of the political movement, the populists filled the position left vacant by the emperor. They led a movement they believed destined by history to culminate in Russia's progress towards the most advanced stage of civilization.

Though these ideas may have been visionary and unrealistic, they were scarcely the result of psychological abnormalities or juvenile dreams, as some historians would have us believe. They resulted from the delegitimization of the existing political system, when the Russian emperor appeared to betray his purported role as leader of Westernization and defender of the well-being of the people as a whole. In the 1870s, young populist intellectuals tried to put their ideas into practice. The famous "going to the people" took place during the "mad summer" of 1872, when hundreds of young intellectuals, inspired by the writing of Peter Lavrov and Michael Bakunin, left the cities and the universities to bring socialism to the peasantry. Their experience was sobering. The peasants were wary, even hostile; many reported the intellectuals to the police. The tsarist police proved more ruthless and effective than they had expected, and great numbers of the revolutionaries ended their pilgrimage into the countryside in tsarist prisons. Nevertheless, they continued their efforts to incite a peasant revolution. Later in the decade, the first national revolutionary organization, "Land and Freedom," agitated among the peasantry, though also with little success.

The frustrations experienced by the members of "Land and Freedom" and the depredations of the police finally turned the populists against the tsarist government itself. In 1879, the "The People's Will party" was founded. Its avowed goal was to destroy the tsarist state by means of terrorist attacks on its officials. "The People's Will" issued a

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death sentence on the tsar. Its members expected that the tsar's assassination would bring the collapse of the tsarist state and an era of political freedom that would permit populists to organize the peasantry for a socialist revolution.

The Marxists

By the early 1880s, the two great hopes of the populists had been shattered. The peasants failed to rebel. The tsarist state had not crumbled. Instead it regathered its forces, as the new tsar, Alexander III, introduced a new period of political oppression. During the 1880s, revolutionary circles were weak and disunited, and hopes for a heroic struggle against the existing order ebbed. Yet the populist dream lived on and would inspire a broader and more successful movement at the beginning of the 20th century, when neo-populist groups united into the Russian Socialist-Revolutionary party.

In the early 1880s the alternative revolutionary doctrine of Marxism began to attract members of the radical intelligentsia. A small group of populists in exile in Switzerland formed the first Russian Marxist group, "The Liberation of Labor." Their leading theorist, Georgii Plekhanov, a former leader of "Land and Freedom," set forth the conclusions that had led them to break from their populist orthodoxy. While still a populist, Plekhanov had observed that industrial workers responded to revolutionary propaganda more readily than peasants. Like other populists, he had explained this as the response of peasants in the city who happened to be more accessible to socialist propaganda. Now Plekhanov began to look upon the peasants as a conservative, and the industrial workers as a revolutionary, force.

Secondly, Plekhanov could not accept the notion advanced by "The People's Will" that a political blow against tsarist authorities could bring meaningful change in itself; in this respect he adhered to his "populist" view that change could only come about from social revolution.

Finally, Plekhanov concluded from statistical studies of the Russian countryside that capitalist influences were already making inroads in the commune: in fact, he argued that the commune was becoming a hot-bed of capitalism.

These observations and conclusions led Plekhanov to reformulate radical hopes in terms of his own understanding of Marx's ideas. He and his followers presented a view of historical change that gave members of the intelligentsia a new approach to political action. They believed that capitalism was a progressive force that encouraged Russia's political and economic development. They saw the proletariat, not the peasantry, as the true revolutionary force that could bring Russia to socialism. "The decomposition of the commune," Plekhanov wrote, "is creating a new class among us, that of the industrial proletariat. More receptive, zealous and evolved, this class will respond more easily to the summons of the revolutionaries than the backward rural population."[7]

The Russian Marxists thus insisted that Russia had to follow Europe's path of economic development and not a short-cut to socialism. They also recognized the importance of political freedom to the future of the revolutionary movement. "Every class struggle is a political struggle," Marx's dictum, appeared as an epigraph to Plekhanov's tract, "Socialism and the Political Struggle." The revolutionary movement first had to conquer political freedom and constitutional government. They anticipated two revolutions in Russia. First, a bourgeois revolution, which would overthrow the autocracy and introduce democratic government and political rights. The second, the socialist revolution, would presumably come only after an extended period of capitalist development swelled the ranks of the proletariat and the revolutionary movement.

The Marxists enjoyed a relatively small following until the late 1890s, when two factors changed the social and intellectual landscape of Russia. First, the famine of 1891 prompted large numbers of intellectuals to go to the countryside to help the peasants. When they arrived, they found the peasants hostile, and suspicious of efforts to assist them, even medical treatment. The Russian intelligentsia encountered ample evidence of what Marx called "the idiocy of rural life."

Secondly, Russian industry began to develop rapidly, as a result of governmental efforts. The working class in the city also grew. With the growth of industry, strikes increased, sharply mounting through the 1890s. The sight of effective action on behalf of social interests heartened intellectuals, who looked back on a past devoid of social forces capable of opposing the autocracy. The autocracy, moreover, had more difficulty coping with urban than rural unrest. Peasant disturbances could be quelled by the army, but the government was more hesitant to use armed force against large numbers of workers in highly conspicuous urban settings. The movement culminated in the great General Strike of 1896 in St. Petersburg, in which Marxist revolutionaries and Marxist propaganda played an important role.

In the 1890s, Marxist attitudes extended beyond the revolutionaries. Members of the intelligentsia began to adopt the Marxist faith in the positive value of economic change. Industrial development now came to be regarded not as a process of degradation and breakdown, but as a liberating development that would destroy the traditions and superstitions of the past and bring Russia into contact with the advancements and progress of the West. In the words of Peter Struve, "We must go to school to capitalism."

Marxism was an inspiring and liberating doctrine for the Russian intelligentsia. At the end of the century, despite bitter police persecutions, the Marxists formed the Russian Social Democratic Party, which held its first congress in 1898. But the propositions of Marxism had to be adapted to the distinctive features of Russia in the 19th century. Marxist writers struggled to determine the lessons of Marxist doctrine for Russian reality and, at the same time, recast it in Russian terms. There were certain notable difficulties in applying Marxist ideas to Russian conditions.

First, the proletariat in Russia at the end of the 19th century was tiny – only 1.5-2 percent of the population. Even if Russian workers were a dynamic element, it was hard to see how they could take the leadership of a country that was still preponderantly agricultural and where the peasantry accounted for about 85 percent of the population.

Second, how could Marxists claim that a workers' party would lead the struggle for bourgeois freedoms, when Marx's doctrine of historical materialism taught that such freedoms came from the struggle of the middle class to protect their proprietary interests?

Third, a practical question: how could the workers' movement, which had largely economic goals – higher wages and shorter hours – be directed at the political goal of transforming the system of government? In short, how could workers be inculcated with political consciousness and learn to assume the leadership of the revolutionary cause?

One answer to these problems came in the form of the so-called "economist" program. The "economists" sought to stimulate the workers' demands for higher wages, shorter hours, and so on, with the expectation that the economic struggle would, over the long run, breed the political consciousness of the proletariat. This kind of thinking had its greatest following in the Marxist circles within the empire.

The orthodox Marxists abroad reacted strongly against what they called "the economist heresy," which they feared would weaken the role of Marxist ideology and divert the workers from the political struggle. Their answer was presented in a tract "What Is To Be Done?" written in 1902 by a young Marxist recently arrived from Russia, Vladimir Ilich Lenin. "What Is To Be Done?" stated what became Lenin's classic argument for the role of the party of professional revolutionaries in guiding the workers to the revolution. The party assumed the role of guardian of the workers' class consciousness, educating them and directing them along the path dictated by history at the moment of the forthcoming revolution.

At first, Lenin's answer was accepted by all the orthodox Marxists, though a few voiced certain reservations. Disagreements about the role of this party erupted a year later, at the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party in 1903. The disagreement culminated in the momentous split in the party. The factions that resulted remained committed to Marxist doctrine, but their conceptions of how to apply Marxist ideas to Russian reality differed sharply.

The Mensheviks, or minority group (they were in the minority only temporarily), saw the answer to the problems of the backwardness of the proletariat and the stages of political development in a long process of raising the consciousness of workers. To this end, they organized a mass party, including all those who subscribed to Marxist goals. The party was a means to educate as well as to lead the workers; it emphasized democratic principles of organization. Leading Mensheviks, in addition to Plekhanov, were Paul Axelrod, Lev Deutsch, Vera Zasulich (all from the original "Liberation of Labor" group), and Iulii Martov.

Lenin succeeded in winning a majority of the delegates to the Second Congress; hence, his following came to be called Bolsheviks. Following the principles of "What Is To Be Done?" more literally than his former allies, he insisted on a tightly organized elite party, consisting only of full-time professional revolutionaries. The members of the party were to be only those who had achieved a high level of political consciousness (i.e., training in Marxist ideology) and who understood the techniques of underground conspiratorial work. Lenin set forth his answer to the Mensheviks in his pamphlet, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back."

We note that despite their Marxist affiliation and presumably materialist beliefs, both groups continued to emphasize the role of ideology, and consequently the intelligentsia in the movement. They followed the tradition of seeking the answers to the distinctiveness of Russia's social and political system and the weakness of political movement in the realm of ideas. Capitalism might move Russia along the rails of progress, but it was the intelligentsia who continued to try to steer the course.

Ideological Politics

At the beginning of the 20th century, on the eve of the revolution of 1905, Russian political life was dominated by intellectuals who were deeply divided over basic questions of Russia's political future. These intellectuals were:

1. Neo-Populists, who in 1905 formed the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. They continued to envision a peasant revolution leading to a system of agrarian socialism. Now they acknowledged a leading role for the urban workers, who together with the peasantry constituted the *narod*, the people. They continued the tactic of terror, now with considerable success, throwing governmental circles into confusion and disarray.

2. The Marxists, the two branches of the Social-Democratic Party, both of which looked forward to rapid industrialization of Russia that would lead to a democratic revolution. The ensuing bourgeois phase would prepare the way for a future workers' revolution that would bring industrial socialism to Russia.

3. The Liberals, who in 1905 formed the Constitutional Democrat, or Cadet, party. They also based their programs on the writings of members of the intelligentsia and looked forward to a system that would combine political freedom with political justice. Russian liberalism had no significant bourgeois component. The liberals comprised moderate noble intellectuals, who led the institutions of self-government, the *zemstva*, and educated professionals—lawyers, doctors, teachers, and so on, many of whom worked in the *zemstva* administrations. Note also that the liberal movement gained strength in Russia after the rise of radicalism, reversing the sequence of Western political development.

These groups held views that were mutually exclusive and sought mutually incompatible goals. In 1905, as Professor Ascher shows, they united to combat the autocracy. After the October Manifesto, their common form broke down and they began to pursue their divergent programs. Their schemes were totalistic, demanding complete commitment. Those who embraced them showed extraordinary heroism and self-sacrifice in their devotion to their ideals. On the other hand, ideological politics of this type permitted neither compromise, nor tolerance, two of the basic principles of our political system.

Such totalistic commitment characterized not only Bolshevism, but all radical and liberal programs of the early 20th century. To understand the revolution, one must understand the motivation and thought of those involved in it. After the revolution of 1905, the only force preventing a fight to the finish among the various participants in Russia's political life was the Russian autocracy. When the autocracy fell away in February 1917, it was only a matter of time before civil strife erupted.

Notes

[1] Alexander Herzen, "Letter to Michelet, September 22, 1851," in Basil Dmytryshyn, *Imperial Russia: A Source Book, 1700-1917* (Hinsdale, IL: The Dryden Press, 1974), p. 247.

[2] Dmitrij Tschizewskij, *Russian Intellectual History* (Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1978), p. 163.

[3] George P. Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind* (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1975), I, pp. 278-79.

[4] Madame de Stael, *Dix annees d'exil* (Paris, 1904), pp. 321-22.

[5] James M. Edie, James P. Scanlan, Mary Barbara Zeldin, eds., *Russian Philosophy* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1965), II, p. 175.

[6] Herzen, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

[7] Quoted in Theodore Dan, *The Origins of Bolshevism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 177.

REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA, 1861–1921

by Abraham Ascher

The period from 1861 to 1921 in Russia might aptly be called the age of modernization and revolution, to use the title of an excellent book recently published by Professor Hans Rogger. During this period Russia underwent fundamental economic, political, and social changes at a remarkably fast pace. An exploration of those changes must touch on a question that is bound to arise in any course on modern Western history or world history taught in secondary schools: Why was the least developed of the major European nations – least developed economically, socially, and politically – the first to undergo a revolution in which a Marxist movement assumed power? After all, this is not what radical thinkers in Russia or the leaders of the Marxist movement expected.

As Professor Wortman has pointed out, many Russian radicals argued that their country would follow its own path toward socialism. Marxists believed that the socialist revolution would take place first in the most developed countries; Germany was generally singled out as the pathfinder on the road to socialism. During the past six-and-a-half decades, however, it has become evident that Russia's turn to revolutionary Marxism was not a historical aberration but rather the beginning of a "pattern" of historical change. Revolutionary movements of the left have triumphed only in underdeveloped countries, whereas industrialized nations have been transformed into welfare states of one form or another.

Thus, in examining the background to the Marxist revolution in early 20th century Russia, we are considering a question that touches on developments in many parts of the contemporary world. This is not to say that conditions in China, Cuba, and other countries that have adopted Communism were identical to those in Russia at the turn of the century. What I am suggesting is that circumstances in all those countries were similar enough to dictate that anyone who wants to understand the contemporary world must pay special attention to events in Russia in the six decades preceding the Revolution of 1917.

It is also true, of course, that the Bolshevik seizure of power came to have a significant impact on the domestic affairs of several major European countries and on international affairs. In fact, the Revolution of 1917 marked a sharp break not only in the history of Russia but in world history. It can be argued that it was the single most important event in our century.

Modernization

A recurring theme in the history of Russia from 1861 to 1917 was the attempt by members of the political elite to modernize the country without introducing concomitant changes in political and social institutions. As was made clear in earlier papers, this had occurred on previous occasions in Russia, but the various forms of modernization of the second half of the 19th century were unique in one very important respect. They produced or gave prominence to social groups such as the intelligentsia, middle class, and industrial proletariat, all of whom became politically articulate and effective at political mobilization of sizable sectors of the population. This is another way of making a point already emphasized by Professor Raeff: by the end of the 19th century, the role of the state as the predominant force in shaping the affairs of the empire had declined substantially. Increasingly, society – that is, forces or groups other than the autocracy and bureaucracy – exerted a strong influence on the country's course of development.

In launching programs of modernization, whether the liberation of the serfs or industrialization, the primary, though not sole, concern of the political elite was to strengthen the power of the state. At the same time, the elite was determined to retain its privileged position in society and to make as few changes as possible in the country's political and social institutions. This created a critical problem, for a growing number of citizens refused to accept the proposition that Russia could remain a powerful state only if the autocracy and the special privileges of the nobility were retained. Discussing the prerogatives of the autocrat in detail is not necessary, but one incident will reveal how powerful he still was early in the 20th century. In September 1905, at the height of the revolutionary turbulence, the rector of the University of Moscow wanted to make a relatively minor concession to students in the hope of restoring calm. The rector proposed to the Minister of Education that he be permitted to increase the number of Jews admitted into the university by 62. (At the Universities of Moscow and St. Petersburg, no more than 3 percent of the student body could be Jewish.) The minister informed the rector that the request could not be acted upon until the tsar had an opportunity to examine the matter and reach a decision.

The political crises in Russia early in our century had deep roots in Russian history. For our purposes it will suffice to begin with 1861, the year in which the Era of Reforms began. The single most important reform was the freeing of the peasants, who composed about three-fourths of the roughly 74 million people in the empire. To appreciate the dimensions of the problem posed by emancipation, consider that in the United States at the time about 11 percent of the population was enslaved. Of course, the racial factor added to the complexity of the problem in the United States, but the far greater numbers that the Russian government had to deal with necessarily meant that emancipation would entail a fundamental reordering of several of the country's institutions.

The lot of the landlord serfs (about 55 percent of the peasant population) was, in fact, not much different from that of chattel. The landlord could sell his serfs without land to another landlord; he could sell entire families or individual members of a family of serfs; he could decide whether or not a serf might marry; except for the most serious criminal offenses, the landlord was the only judge in his domain, and he could order serfs to be flogged, imprisoned, or exiled to Siberia. Unlike slaves, the serfs worked parcels of land to procure their own subsistence, but they owed either labor services or an annual payment to the state or landlord. The state peasants were better off than the landlord serfs, but even they were in bondage to the state and were the defenseless prey of petty officials. The common feature of the state peasants and the landlord serfs was that all were tied to the land; they could not freely move from their place of abode.

The Russian government embarked on a momentous and dangerous course when it decided to emancipate the serfs. Only the most pressing concerns induced it to do so. There was a growing recognition among some sectors of the elite that treating human beings as chattel was immoral. To others, it had become clear that serfdom was a drag on the economy, making it difficult for Russia to modernize its economy, to industrialize. There was also the fear of serious unrest if the institution of serfdom were not eliminated. As Tsar Alexander II put it in 1856: "It is better to abolish serfdom from above than to wait until the serfs begin to liberate themselves from below."

Apparently, the single most important consideration for the government was military. Even though Russia had a larger standing army (two and a quarter million men) than any other state, the country was humiliated during the Crimean War (1853–56). The Russian army could not defeat poorly organized foreign troops far removed from their source of supplies. Consequently, after the war ended, the government decided to restructure its military forces. Following the example of the European powers, it planned to reduce the size of the standing army and form a trained strategic reserve. The advantages would be a lower military budget and a larger, better trained army in time of war. So long as masses of peasants remained serfs, however, the plan was unrealistic, for it would mean the release each year of large numbers of peasants trained in the use of firearms and military tactics in a society that could not absorb them. Under such circumstances, the maintenance of public order would have been extremely difficult.

It seemed clear, then, that without emancipation of the serfs, the military reforms and the revitalization of Russia would not be feasible. After much deliberation, the government decided to abolish an institution that had existed for at least two centuries, but it devised the emancipation decree in such a way as to maintain as much as possible of the old order.

Still, the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 was an extremely important reform, if for no other reason than that it changed the legal condition of the peasants. Men were no longer permitted to sell other men or to transfer men arbitrarily from field work to house work; peasants were now free to marry, to acquire property, to become traders, and to bring actions to court.

A principal drawback, however, was that the peasants did not receive enough land; at best, they were given as much land as they had worked prior to the reform. That had not been very ample. The peasants were also forced to pay redemption dues for 49 years. The commune was not only preserved but strengthened; for administrative and political purposes, every peasant was to be a member of the commune, which exercised vast powers. For example, a peasant who wished to leave his area of residence even for a temporary period had to acquire a passport from the administration of the commune. The assembly of the commune took over the bulk of the public law powers previously exercised by landlords; it also supervised and guaranteed the redemption payments. In the repartitional communes, by far the most common, the land was periodically reallocated, a practice that hampered modernization. Few peasants were willing to make improvements on land that was not permanently under their control.

When the peasants became aware of the details of the emancipation decree, they were incensed. They had believed that they would be granted "full freedom," which to them meant that they would be given, free of charge, all the land held by landlords. The peasants, it must be stressed, had long been convinced that all the land belonged to those who worked it. They also believed that the tsar, their "father," wanted them to have the land and that only the self-serving landlords and bureaucrats had prevented the tsar's will from being carried out. Significantly, there were more peasant disturbances after emancipation than in the years preceding the reform.

Over the next few decades, the situation of most peasants deteriorated. One reason for this was the sharp rise in the peasant population, which grew from 50 to 79 million in the years from 1860-97. The result was that the size of land allotments shrank from an average of 13.2 *desiatinas* (one *desiatina* equals 2.7 acres) in 1877 to 10.4 in 1905. The average tax on the peasant's land, moreover, was ten times as high as on the noble's land. Agriculture remained extremely backward, in large part because of the periodic partitions of the land. In Germany, for example, one *desiatina* yielded 128 *poods* (one *pood* equals 36 lbs.) of wheat in the summer and 104 *poods* in the winter; in European Russia, the comparable figures were 64 and 41 *poods*. Periodic famines, caused by inclement weather, only added to the woes of the peasantry.

By the early 20th century, the peasantry was profoundly disaffected; unrest in the countryside came to be a serious problem. This is not to suggest that the peasants were to any large extent conscious revolutionaries or even that they were hostile to the monarchy as such. On the contrary, many of them believed that the tsar was "God's vicar on earth," who had their interests at heart. Much of the time, peasant unrest was directed not at the government but at the manor houses; the peasants' aim was to secure land, not to change the political system. The crucial point is that at times of political crisis, the peasantry could not be counted upon to serve as a bulwark of the existing order.

A few words should be said about the other reforms of the 1860s and 1870s. In 1864 the government introduced a series of judicial reforms, which provided for open and public trials and a jury system and eliminated the worst forms of corporal punishment. The judicial reforms may be considered a first step toward the establishment of the rule of law, but they were not rigorously applied and were often superseded, especially after 1881, by various emergency decrees. The military reforms of 1874 reduced the period of service from 25 to 6 years, created a reserve and militia, and introduced a more humane system of discipline. Finally, the government introduced (in 1864) a system of local self-government. Elected by a complicated, weighted suffrage, the *zemstvos* nevertheless were quite effective in such areas as the building of roads and the administration of schools, hospitals, and philanthropic institutions. The activists in the *zemstvos*, many of them from the gentry class, played an important role in the liberal movement that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Without question, the reforms of the 1860s and 1870s produced fundamental changes in Russian society, but they did not satisfy the expectations raised by the discussions of reform in the 1850s. Nor did they create institutions that might have provided adequate opportunities for emerging social groups to play a significant role in public affairs. Neither the middle class nor the working class could find adequate legal outlets for self-expression. Consequently, members of these classes increasingly turned to illegal political activities.

Industrialization

Against all odds, the industrial proletariat developed into a powerful force by the early 20th century. This group significantly influenced the course of events during the three revolutions that Russia underwent in 1905 and 1917. Even though the proletariat constituted only about 2.4 percent (3 million people) of the total population in 1900, a party that claimed to be its representative managed to take control of the state in less than two decades. This raises some intriguing questions: Why was the Russian proletariat, absolutely and relatively much smaller than, say, the German proletariat, so much more radical than the German workers? Why was the Marxist movement in Russia politically so much more effective than its counterpart in Germany? A brief discussion of the character of Russian industrialization and of government policies toward the workers will suggest some answers to these questions.

Modern industrialization began in the 1880s and gained momentum a decade later under the impetus of the dynamic Sergei Witte, who was Minister of Finance from 1894 to 1903. Witte promoted industrialization not because he believed that economic modernization was desirable in itself or because he wished to raise the standard of living of the Russian people. He wanted to transform the economy because he knew that if Russia did not become industrialized, the country would inevitably lose its status as a great power. Witte had also convinced himself that Russia could undergo economic modernization and yet retain her ancient political and social institutions. Late in 1905, when the Empire was in revolutionary turmoil, Witte realized that he had miscalculated. He now favored political change, but only grudgingly. "I have a constitution in my head," he said, "but in by heart I spit on it."

In part because Russia was a latecomer to industrialization, the state played an inordinately large role in the national economy. For one thing, the government placed extremely high tariffs on foreign commodities and encouraged foreign investments and loans to Russian industrialists. It also became directly involved in the economy: by 1912, the state owned 68 percent of all railways; by 1899, almost one-third of all metallurgical production was bought by the state; from 1903 to 1913 the government received over 25 percent of its income from its various holdings, rather than from taxes. Another important characteristic of Russian industrialization was the prevalence of very large enterprises. In 1866, 43 percent of the workers in the cotton industry were employed at plants with more than 100 employees; in 1877, 51 percent; in 1894, 72 percent. The proportion of workers employed in factories with more than 1,000 employees was three times as large in Russia as in Germany, generally considered the leader in industrial concentration.

The concentration of industry facilitated both the formation of trade unions and the growth of political activism by workers. The government's policies governing the relations between workers and employers also stimulated these developments. From the beginning of industrialization, the government made clear its determination to maintain the values of the autocratic regime in the new sector of the economy. Indeed, until 1905 the authorities denied that there was any labor problem at all. They claimed that relations between employers and their workers were patriarchal in character, no different from the assumed relations between landlords and peasants. Many senior officials knew better, but any public acknowledgment that the patriarchal relationship might not be applicable to the modern industrial setting was considered, in the words of one historian, "a denial of the validity of the social order on which the tsarist regime was based."

The system of disciplinary paternalism that prevailed in the factories was harsh. The Penal Code of 1845, for example, branded collective resistance to employers as tantamount to an uprising against the state, punishable by 15 to 20 years of hard labor. Organizations of workers that might foment strikes were illegal. Conditions in factories were grim: until 1897 a working day of 13 hours was the norm. Thereafter, the workday was shortened to 11-1/2 hours. Since many laborers still returned for part of the year to their villages for field work, they were generally housed in large, unsanitary barracks during those months of the year that they worked in factories. Within the plant, the managers and owners treated the workers condescendingly: they addressed them in the familiar "thou," searched them for stolen goods when they left the factory for the day, and imposed a series of fines on them for infractions of the strict "Rules of Internal Order." Workers deeply resented these humiliations. During the revolutions of 1905 and 1917, their lists of grievances almost invariably included demands for polite treatment by factory officials.

By the late 19th century, it became apparent that Russian workers would not indefinitely accept their status of inferiority and that they would not remain docile. The growth in the number of strikes clearly indicated a changing mood among the proletariat. Between 1862 and 1869, only 6 strikes and 29 disturbances in factories were recorded. By 1885, the annual number of strikes had risen to 20; between 1895 and 1904, that number was about 176. In 1903 alone, there were 550 strikes involving 138,877 workers. Most of the strikes were caused by disputes over economic issues or general conditions in the factories. Yet every time workers engaged in a work stoppage, they contravened the law and were thus also making a political statement. In 1905 a large number of them began to agitate explicitly for changes in the political system.

Revolution of 1905

In the meantime, liberalism had emerged as an organized force. Initially, people associated with the *zemstvos* advocated a liberal program for Russia. They were joined in the late 1890s by such professionals as lawyers, doctors, writers, and professors. Highly articulate, the latter soon exerted an influence on the national scene out of all proportion to their numbers. Significantly, industrialists and businessmen in general were slow to take up the liberal cause; their economic dependence on the state made them politically very cautious.

The liberals favored a fundamental reordering of society. They advocated the rule of law, the granting of civil liberties to all citizens, a sharp curtailment in the powers of the monarch, and the creation of a legislative body to be elected by the people. In 1902 liberals founded a journal (*Osvobozhdenie*); two years later they created an underground organization, the Union of Liberation. Within another two years, liberals had mobilized public opinion to such a degree that they were able to galvanize the opposition to the old order and thus set the stage for the first Russian revolution.

Russia's unexpected military defeats in 1904 and 1905 at the hands of the Japanese strengthened and emboldened the liberals. Although the charge that the Russian government deliberately provoked Japan in order to stave off revolution has never been proven and is almost certainly unfounded, there can be no doubt that elements within the tsarist government mindlessly pursued a foreign policy in the Far East that was bound to be regarded as provocative by the Japanese. Still, when the Japanese attacked the Russians at Port Arthur in January 1905, Tsar Nicholas II could count on general support for the war effort. As one report after another of military incompetence by the Russians reached St. Peterburg and other centers of the empire, the public turned against the war. For about eight months, the liberals held their fire, but in the fall and winter of 1904-05 they unleashed an extensive campaign (the so-called banquet campaign) for constitutional change. It was a remarkably effective campaign, which the government, having lost self-confidence as a result of the military defeats, could not stop. It marked the beginning of the Revolution of 1905 and in many ways determined the agenda for the second phase of the revolution, which began with Bloody Sunday on January 9, 1905.

A detailed account of the revolution is not possible within the confines of this paper, but a few general comments would seem to be appropriate. After the senseless massacre of 130 peaceful marchers, who merely wished to present a petition of grievances to the autocrat, the industrial proletariat for the first time became a social force to be reckoned with. At first, they engaged in massive strikes throughout the empire in support of wide-ranging economic demands. Indeed, it is noteworthy that none of the political parties of the left had played any significant role in preparing the procession of the tsar, which was organizeed by a priest, Father Gapon. Bolshevik agitators who appeared at preparatory meetings for the purpose of radicalizing the crowds were shouted down and occasionally even hauled off the platform. Not until the spring and summer of 1905 did large numbers of workers become politicized; they now began to demand an end to the war and an end to autocratic rule. Even then, however, political activists exerted little influence over the mass protest movements, which were essentially spontaneous expressions of outrage against the authorities.

Within weeks of Bloody Sunday, virtually every segment of society was caught up in the turbulence: students at universities and high schools went on strike, disorders erupted in the borderlands, peasants staged attacks on local landlords' estates, middle-class people ignored the government's regulations on public meetings and press censorship. On several occasions, soldiers and sailors mutinied. To disinterested observers, it seemed as though the entire structure of society was on the verge of collapse.

The government was incapable of coping with the growing unrest. Instead of settling on a firm course of action, it alternated between strident reassertions of the autocratic principle and vague promises of reform. Large numbers of people simply refused to take seriously either the government's promises or its claims to absolute power. Had the government made some far-reaching concessions, such as the establishment of the rule of law and the creation of a legislative organ with real powers, it might well have succeeded in separating the moderates and the centrists from the revolutionary left within the opposition movement. The tsar was unwilling to tamper with the institution of autocracy, however, and the result was a deepening of the revolution.

The high point came in October, when a general strike brought the government to its knees. Again, the strike was a spontaneous affair; no one planned it, no one organized it. Once it began, however, it attracted wide support from various sectors of society. Although workers took the lead, they quickly received the support of the middle classes, who viewed the strike primarily as a weapon to wrest political concessions from the tsar. The opposition could act in unison because the political issue, the elimination of the autocratic regime, had assumed center stage. One city after another literally came to a standstill, and the government had no choice but to yield, especially since it was not sure that it could count on the army to obey orders to crush the strikers by force. On October 17 the tsar reluctantly accepted Witte's advice and issued the October Manifesto, which promised civil liberties and the establishment of a legislature (*duma*) with substantial powers.

It was a great victory for the opposition. Had it been consolidated, the Russian Empire would have been on the road toward a Western-style constitutional state. But the new order faced enormous problems: the tsar did his best to undo the concession; large numbers of people, enraged at the government's surrender to the opposition, violently and indiscriminately attacked Jews and anyone else presumed to have been hostile to the old regime; and the Petersburg Soviet (council of workers' deputies) grew increasingly militant. The upshot was that the Days of Liberty, the period of freedom after the issuance of the October Manifesto, came to an end within two months in a torrent of government repression.

The last gasp of the revolution took place in December 1905, when the workers in Moscow, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks and other revolutionaries, staged an uprising that was quashed within ten days. For about 15 months, the political struggle between the forces of change and the forces of the old order continued, but the opposition failed to regain the strength that it had commanded from late 1904 until late 1905. On June 3, 1907, Peter Stolypin, the Prime Minister, staged a *coup d'etat* that effectively ended the revolution; he arbitrarily changed the electoral law so as to assure the election of a *duma* dominated by conservatives.

On the surface, the failure of the revolution seems puzzling. Never before in any European revolution had four popular movements – the middle class, the industrial proletariat, the peasantry, and national minorities – challenged the established order. Never before had the working class played so dynamic a role during a revolution. If the opposition was so pervasive, why was the government able to survive? One important reason was that the opposition did not simultaneously attack the old order. Each one of the rebellious groups acted more or less independently, which meant that most of the time the government was confronted with one protest movement at a time. When several movements (workers, professional groups, and some industrialists) did coalesce in October 1905, the government had to make far-reaching concessions. But these groups acted as a unified force for only a very short period, a few weeks at best. The disagreements between liberals and socialists, to mention only one source of conflict, were simply too deep. The liberals by and large did not favor a republic or socialism; nor did they support violent methods of struggle against tsarism. When radicals took up arms late in 1905, the army, though plagued by disorder, in the end proved to be a reliable instrument for repressing the left. Finally, in 1906 foreign governments strengthened the tsarist regime by advancing substantial loans to it.

Although the revolution had been defeated, the Russia of 1907 was different in some important respects from the Russia of 1904. With the existence of an elected legislature, the powers of the tsar and bureaucracy were slightly reduced, for the wishes of the *duma* could not be completely ignored by the government. The landed gentry, the business class, and the upper stratum of the peasantry, all of whom participated in the elections of the *duma*, now exercised some influence in public affairs. Moreover, trade unions and various associations of cooperatives remained active, and censorship over the press and other publications was much less stringent. In short, Russia had taken a modest step away from autocratic absolutism.

Revolution of 1917

Lenin referred to the Revolution of 1905 as the "dress rehearsal" for 1917, by which he meant that the turbulence of that year was part of a predetermined course of Russian history toward socialism. Lenin also held that the experiences of 1905, including the devastating defeat of the workers in Moscow in December of that year, provided the proletariat essential political and military training, which it used effectively in 1917. This interpretation of the linkage between 1905 and 1917 has become the stock in trade of Soviet historians and Marxist historians generally.

Non-Marxist historians, whose views predominated in Western scholarship from the 1930s to the 1960s, have contended that for seven years (1907-14) the future of the empire was open-ended. The Revolution of 1905 is seen not as a precursor of 1917, but rather as an event that exposed the weaknesses of the old order and enabled competing social forces to become active in the political arena to an extent unprecedented in Russia. These historians also point to various trends that were favorable to a peaceful modernization of Russia. The economy was on an upswing; for at least five years, labor militancy was in decline. The government launched a major campaign against illiteracy, recording some impressive achievements.

Most important, Stolypin introduced a series of reforms in the countryside designed to turn the peasants into a conservative force by transforming them into private landowners. In thus undermining the commune, Stolypin reversed the deeply entrenched policy of Russian governments. For a variety of reasons, the process of implementing the agrarian reforms was slow, but by 1917, 40 percent of the peasants possessed title to the land they worked. However, much of the land was still in strips, which was a drag on efficiency, and 40 percent of the peasant holdings were still subject to periodic repartition. Nonetheless, important changes were under way and, so the argument runs, had the war not intervened, the country would have developed along lines uncongenial to revolution.

Since the 1960s a growing number of historians in the West have questioned the plausibility of this line of reasoning. They contend that during the two years preceding the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, social and political tensions in Russia became increasingly acute. The brutal massacre by troops of 200 strikers at the Lena Gold Mines in 1912 triggered increased militancy in the labor movement, which manifested itself in victories by the Bolsheviks over the more moderate Mensheviks in several important labor union elections. In 1914 there was also an upsurge of industrial strikes. Several groups within the liberal movement launched a new and vigorous campaign for political reform. The historians who emphasize these developments insist that the world war merely delayed the onset of a new political crisis, which would most likely have evolved into a major confrontation between the autocracy and society.

The scholarly dispute over the background to the Revolution of 1917 cannot be definitively resolved. It is a fact that the tsarist regime collapsed after three years of terrible bloodshed, which once again exposed the backwardness, incompetence, and callousness of the old order. It turned out that the senior officers in the army were not capable of running a vast military machine or of devising sound strategy in the battles against the troops of the Central Powers; in 1916 alone, more than 2 million Russian soldiers were killed and wounded and 350,000 were taken prisoner. Economic conditions worsened appreciably, and the political leadership failed to maintain public support for the war effort. Nothing demonstrates more vividly the crisis of leadership than the fact that a depraved priest (Rasputin) was able to exert enormous influence on the tsarist family and over political and military matters of the greatest importance. In November 1916, members of the royal family, thoroughly demoralized by the state of affairs, took it upon themselves to assassinate Rasputin. Many people in the upper reaches of Russian society had concluded that the country was heading for the abyss.

Although it is common to speak of the Revolution of 1917, there were actually two revolutions that year; the two upheavals were quite different in the way they developed, in their mass support, and in their ultimate goals. The first revolution, late in February, broke out spontaneously, without prior planning or organization. Indeed, in a speech to working youth in Zürich in January 1917, Lenin made it clear that he did not anticipate an upheaval in the near future: "We of the older generation may not live to see the decisive battles of this coming revolution. But I can, I believe, express the confident hope that the youth which is working so splendidly in the socialist movement of Switzerland, and of the whole world, will be fortunate enough not only to fight, but to win, in the coming proletariat revolution."

Yet once masses of workers began demonstrating in the streets of Petrograd, it became clear that the opposition embraced virtually all segments of society. The monarchist *duma* deputy V. V. Shulgin, no friend of the demonstrators, described the situation accurately: "The trouble was that in that large city [Petrograd] it was impossible to find a few hundred people who felt kindly toward the Government. That's not all. The Government did not feel kindly toward itself. There was not a single Minister who believed in himself or in what he was doing." The people had simply lost confidence in the existing government; under such circumstances, the tsarist regime could not survive. No amount of repression can maintain in power a government that is so thoroughly devoid of popular support. After four days of street demonstrations, growing numbers of soldiers refused to disperse the crowds; many even gave arms to the people in the streets. Tsar Nicholas II, realizing the hopelessness of his position abdicated.

Eight months later, toward the end of October, a second revolution took place. This one was planned and organized by the leadership of the Bolshevik party, whose membership consisted at most of 400,000 people out of a total population of 160 million. The Bolsheviks could take power without much difficulty because the Provisional Government, created in February, simply collapsed.

In truth, the Provisional Government, consisting at first primarily of liberals, never succeeded in establishing its authority over the country, even though it introduced civil liberties and promised to hold an election for a constituent assembly, which was to produce a constitution for Russia. The problem was that at the very moment that the Provisional Government came into being, a rival center of authority, the Soviets, appeared in Petrograd and soon thereafter in many other areas of the empire. Chosen haphazardly by workers and soldiers, the Soviets, dominated by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, enjoyed the confidence of the politically active masses. The leader of the Petrograd Soviet acknowledged the Provisional Government as the legitimate authority, but did so half-heartedly and would not accept any posts in the cabinet. It soon became evident, however, that without the full support of the Soviets, the government could not enforce its will. As a result, there emerged what came to be known as "dual power." On the one hand, the government was formally charged with running the country, but it could not by itself exercise power. On the other hand, the Soviets, the repository of political power because the masses had confidence in them, refused to assume any responsibility of government.

The leaders of the Soviets, all of them socialists, had plausible reasons for refusing to participate in governing the country: they believed that Russia was ripe only for a bourgeois revolution, feared that their assumption of power would push moderates into the counterrevolutionary camp, and lacked confidence in their ability to administer the machinery of government. Although the leaders of the Soviets did not intend to cripple the government, their overall stance inevitably produced a situation that can only be described as political paralysis. Effective government is not possible in a country where there are two foci of authority, each with its own concerns and aims.

Clashes between the Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government broke out soon after the collapse of tsarism. The principal source of conflict was the war, which by now was extremely unpopular and which profoundly affected all major facets of national life. Indeed, it increasingly became evident that if the war could not be brought to an end quickly, the government would not be able to cope with any of the pressing problems facing the country: redistribution of the land, creation of a constitutional order, restoration of a viable economy. So long as the government failed to make progress in these critical areas, it was not likely to gain for itself the popular support it needed to survive.

Yet the government failed to take adequate measures to extricate Russia from the war. One may question the wisdom of the Provisional Government's conduct of affairs, but it must be recognized that it faced difficult choices. It feared that abandonment of the allies and the conclusion of a separate peace would ensure the dominance over Europe of the Central Powers, all of which were ruled by monarchs who surely would have destroyed the democratic order established in Russia in February of 1917. The government also believed that it had a moral commitment to France and England to continue the military struggle until the enemy had been defeated. Some members of the Provisional Government (most notably Pavel Miliukov, the Foreign Minister) also wanted Russia to remain in the war for less lofty reasons: they wanted to annex Constantinople at the conclusion of a victorious war.

The Soviets and their supporters, distressed in particular over Miliukov's stand, favored determined action by Russia to bring the war to an end. They urged all the belligerent powers to enter into negotiations for peace on the basis of the formula "No indemnities, no annexations." The Provisional Government could not be budged from its position. This proved to be its most costly mistake.

Lenin sensed, before anyone else, that the revolution had not yet run its full course. To be sure, when he arrived in Petrograd (from Switzerland) on April 9, even his party followed a policy of conditional support for the Provisional Government, combined with pressure upon it to extricate Russia from the war. Lenin found it extremely difficult to persuade his own colleagues to adopt his program, which amounted to a complete repudiation of the Soviet's policies. Lenin called for an end of any support for the government, urged troops at the front to fraternize with Austrian and German soldiers, and proclaimed the imminence of the proletarian stage of the revolution. Lenin wanted the Bolsheviks to commit themselves publicly to the creation in the very near future of a "commune state" based on the Soviets.

Lenin's program, which seemed utterly unrealistic in April, attracted support largely because it soon became evident that the country was disintegrating. The peasants, impatient with the immobilism of the government, seized land. In the cities, workers took over factories after expelling the owners and managers. Local Soviets assumed control over local government. National minorities broke away from the central authorities, either by proclaiming autonomy or independence. Finally, the army was breaking up; soldiers, eager to end the war and to return to their villages to take part in land seizures, deserted en masse (some two million men in the course of 1917). The Provisional Government promised reform and appealed to the population not to support these mass movements, but not many people took seriously the promises or the appeals. By October, the government was capable of little more than marking time.

Prodded by Lenin, the Bolsheviks came to support all the mass movements that were breaking down society, even though the land seizures by peasants and the general breakdown of authority ran counter to their long-range goals of a state-controlled economy and a highly centralized political order. Lenin's immediate goal was to seize power, and he could achieve that only if his party was attuned to the mood of the rebellious masses. His strategy was brilliant, and it worked to perfection. When the Bolsheviks staged their *coup* on October 25, they encountered very little resistance. Neither the military nor the people at large were prepared to come to the help of a government that had proven itself incapable of tackling any of the country's major problems. The real test for Lenin and his followers came during the next four years, when they had to consolidate their power in the face of enormous economic difficulties as well as military and political opposition to their rule.

One day after taking power, Lenin announced a series of policies he knew would receive wide acclaim. First, he came out in favor of the Socialist-Revolutionary land program: the property rights of the nobility would be eliminated, and lands in rural regions would be placed at the disposal of Land Committees and district Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. Lenin justified this abandonment of the Bolshevik land program of nationalization on the ground that it was now necessary to demonstrate to the peasants that they were no longer subservient to the landlords. With this one move, Lenin assured himself of at least the temporary support or neutrality of the peasants, still the overwhelming majority of the population.

Lenin also introduced workers' control in industry and in commercial and agricultural enterprises, abolished distinctions and special privileges based on class, eliminated titles in the army, and issued a decree outlawing inequality in wages. Perhaps most important, he took immediate steps to

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end the war. The negotiations with Germany dragged on for a few months, but in March 1918 the Bolsheviks extricated Russia from the war against the wishes of the Allies. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk imposed extraordinarily harsh conditions on Russia, but Lenin nevertheless insisted on its acceptance. He was convinced that the treaty would not remain in force for long, for he expected the proletariat in other countries to emulate his example. Once the revolution had triumphed throughout Europe, relations between states would be harmonious, and the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk would be abrogated.

This was the idealistic period of the Russian Revolution: the Bolshevik leadership proclaimed that equality and popular rule would be their guiding principles. But some actions taken by that leadership raised doubts in people's minds about the direction of the revolution. For one thing, Lenin made clear that he wanted a monopoly of power for his party, even though it represented a small minority of the Russian people. Newspapers opposed to the government were suppressed; this was ostensibly a temporary measure, to be discarded as soon as the new order was firmly consolidated.

On December 20, 1917, the Cheka, the security police, was established to guard the revolution. The Cheka proceeded to arrest opponents of the Bolsheviks without regard to due process. When members of his own party protested the actions of the Cheka, Lenin attacked them as "narrowminded intelligentsia" who "sob and fuss" over the security police's "mistakes." He further declared that "When we are reproached with cruelty, we wonder how people can forget the most elementary Marxism." Nikolai Bukharin, a leading figure in the Bolshevik party, justified the terror during the early years of Communist rule with a quotation from St. Just, one of the militants of the French Revolution of 1789: "One must rule with iron, when one cannot rule with law."

Still, the elections to the constituent assembly, planned by the Provisional Government, were allowed to proceed late in November 1917. The Bolsheviks received 25 percent of the total votes, 9 million out of 36 million. It is true that the lists of delegates for the constituent assembly had been drawn up before the Bolshevik seizure of power and may therefore not have fully represented the will of the people.

It is also true that Lenin was not an admirer of democratic procedures. On December 26, he published an article in *Pravda* in which he declared that "A republic of soviets is a higher form [of government] than the customary bourgeois republic with its constituent assembly." He indicated that the constituent assembly, which was to meet early in January 1918, would have to accept "Soviet power...the Soviet constitution." Otherwise, "a crisis in connection with the constituent assembly can be solved only by revolutionary means." The assembly was permitted to meet, but when it became clear that the delegates were not well disposed towards the new regime, Bolshevik sailors dissolved it by force. This was, in the words of historian E. H. Carr, the final "tearing asunder of the veil of bourgeois constitutionalism."

For the next four years, it was by no means clear that the Leninists would be able to retain power, for they faced an array of intractable problems. The economy collapsed: from 1913 to 1917, industrial output declined by two-thirds; in 1920 industrial output had declined even further, to 12.8 percent of the 1913 level. Agricultural production in 1921 was 54 percent of what it had been in 1913. It has been estimated that between 1918 and 1920, more than 7 million people died of malnutrition. Also during that period, Moscow lost about one-half of its population and Petrograd lost an even larger proportion.

By the spring of 1918, the government was engaged in a civil war against several armies representing diverse political groupings, all of them determined to overthrow the Bolsheviks. Finally, in 1918 several foreign armies began to operate on Russian soil. Czech, French, British, and United States troops sought to reopen the eastern front against Germany. In addition, the Japanese sent troops into Russia for expansionist reasons. To one degree or another, all the foreign armies helped the Whites, who were trying to overthrow the Bolsheviks.

Some historians contend that it was these general circumstances that drove the Bolsheviks into adopting harsh measures of rule and the one-party state. The Bolsheviks, it is argued, had no choice; any party replacing the Provisional Government would have followed more or less the same policies. Thus, it was not so much ideology as necessity that prompted Lenin to initiate, in June 1918, the economic program known as War Communism. All grain was now declared to be a state monopoly, and committees of poor peasants were organized to requisition grain from well-to-do peasants. Some of the grain was distributed to poor peasants, and the rest was handed over to the state. In November 1918, all trade was nationalized, which meant that by now the economy was effectively under state control.

It may be that Lenin believed he had to take draconian measures to overcome the economic crisis, but there is no doubt that he also believed that he was implementing Marxist ideas. He spoke openly of bringing the "class war" into the villages. Even after War Communism had proven to be a failure, he referred to it as an admirable attempt to introduce socialism quickly. The peasants staunchly opposed the government's policies and, as already noted, agricultural production continued to decline sharply.

In 1921, by which time the Whites had been defeated and the foreign intervention had ended, Lenin decided to abandon War Communism in favor of the so-called New Economic Policy, a partial retreat to capitalism. The main provision of the new policy was quite simple. Instead of having to yield to the state their entire surplus, the peasants had to pay a tax. They could sell the rest of their surplus on the free market.

It is significant that at the moment of economic relaxation, the Bolsheviks took a major step toward the creation of what the historian Leonard Schapiro called the "Communist Autocracy." At the Tenth Party Congress, meeting in the spring of 1921, the delegates, following the recommendation of Lenin, outlawed "all groups with separate platforms" (or factions) within the Communist Party. This meant that free discussion of issues within the party would now be severely curtailed.

Lenin also took steps to outlaw all non-Communist political movements. He particularly wanted to eliminate the Mensheviks as a political force. For three years, the Mensheviks had called for the abolition of War Communism and the introduction of measures akin to those of the New Economic Policy. Since they were also an avowedly Marxist party whose support came from the working class (a party, it now turned out, that had been right all along in arguing that Russia was not yet ready for socialism), the Leninists feared that people might be tempted to raise an awkward question: Why should a party with such a record not be given power? Unwilling to face that question, the Bolsheviks proceeded to outlaw the Mensheviks and all other parties that still had a mass following. The measure against factions and the campaign against non-Communist parties proved to be a turning point in the development of the authoritarian, one-party state in Soviet Russia.

Lenin's retention of power in face of all the difficulties he confronted was surely his most impressive achievement as a political leader. In part, he owed his success to his tactical flexibility: he had little compunction about adopting measures that ran counter to his ideology so long as they were popular and strengthened his movement politically. Even so, it is very doubtful that the Bolsheviks ever enjoyed the active support of anywhere near a majority of the population. But the masses, exhausted from three years of war, ten months of revolution, and several years of economic deprivation, succumbed to indifference, which inevitably helped the regime in power.

It should also be noted that the patriotism of the Russian people worked in favor of the Bolsheviks, which is ironic, since the Leninists had always decried nationalism as a bourgeois ideology designed to evoke popular support for the capitalist state. It was a fact that the White armies were linked to the foreign interventionists and that the Bolsheviks were leading the struggle against the foreign invaders. The Bolsheviks also benefited from the deep divisions among their opponents, which prevented the formation of an effective, unified campaign against the revolutionary regime. On the other hand, the Bolsheviks controlled a compact area during the civil war and succeeded in building up a strong military force. Finally, Lenin's consolidation of his party's rule owed much to his success in creating within a relatively short period of time an effective state apparatus.

Yet it must be kept in mind that when Lenin took power in 1917, he did not expect to be able to bring the revolution to a successful conclusion without help from comrades in the West. In seizing the reins of government in backward Russia, he had modified the traditional Marxist scenario of revolution, but he had not completely abandoned it. For him, the triumph of socialism on a worldwide basis still depended on the proletariat in the industrialized countries. Western countries, however, proved to be far more resistant to revolution than Marxists had anticipated. In the immediate post-World War I period, there was considerable social and political unrest in Central and Western Europe, but nowhere did a revolutionary Marxist party take power and hold it for any length of time. Indeed, it can be said that the revolutionary experiment in Russia backfired in the sense that it frightened off people in other countries. Certainly, the dread of having to endure the "Russian chaos" was an important factor in encouraging many socialists in Germany to shun the Soviet experiment during the Revolution of 1918-19.

The left throughout the Western world became sharply divided over the "Russian question," causing deep splits in radical movements. The break-up of the German socialist party is especially important because Germany had always been regarded by Marxists as pivotal for the advance of socialism. To be sure, the revolutionary left in Germany (and elsewhere) joined the newly created Communist party, which unquestioningly defended the social and political system in Russia. But the right-wing Social Democrats, the dominant sector in the party, strongly opposed the Soviet experiment as utopian and as a perversion of democratic ideals. The centrists, the mainstay of the Independent Social Democratic Party (in existence from 1917 to 1922), adopted an ambivalent attitude toward the Soviet experiment, which is worth considering in some detail because – in one form or another – it has had wide currency among intellectuals over the past seven decades.

The centrists conceded that socialism in Russia was not what they had expected or hoped for. Yet they insisted that the new order was more humane than the old one. At bottom, the centrists were psychologically incapable of disavowing a system of rule that they considered to be "their offspring." This attitude was most cogently expressed in 1930 by Friedrich Adler, the leader of Austrian socialism, in a long debate over the Russian experiment with Karl Kautsky, the most eminent exponent of orthodox Marxism from about 1890 to 1914 who nevertheless repudiated Lenin's revolution. Adler drew an analogy between the birth of the Communist system of rule in Russia and the birth of a defective child. Adler contended that if a mother is carrying a child that everyone knows will be seriously crippled, then one must do all in one's power to prevent the birth of that baby. If the child is nevertheless brought into the world, its development should be fostered despite the weaknesses of its constitution and the doubts about its healthy growth. Similarly, it was right for socialists to have argued against a Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917, but once the Bolsheviks had led a successful revolution, socialists everywhere must help maintain the new order, foster its growth, and attempt to improve its "health."

This is a line of reasoning that still appeals to many radicals in the West, though the object of their attentions is not so much the Soviet Union as the countries of the Third World that have undergone revolutions. It is noteworthy, however, that in several important respects these countries have followed an historical path similar to that of Russia. Underdeveloped or "backward," they fell prey to socialist revolution after the elites embarked on a process of modernization; the driving force has been a numerically small party under the control of a radical intelligentsia that could count on the support or political indifference of the peasantry, constituting the vast majority of the population. Of course, some countries, such as Iran, have undergone revolutions of a different kind, though even in Iran the elite's attempt to modernize the country was a critical factor in producing the preconditions for revolution. Still, most successful revolutions in recent decades have been closer to the "Russian model," which, in fact, exercised an important influence, ideologically and psychologically, on the elites in less-developed countries. This is by no means the only reason for studying the revolutionary era in Russia, but it does demonstrate that the subject has a certain immediacy. In courses designed to introduce high school students to the discipline of history, that is a point of some consequence.

SOVIET RUSSIA UNDER LENIN AND STALIN: 1921–1953

by Robert C. Tucker

It is hardly possible to understand the situation of Soviet Russia today without knowing what happened under Lenin and Stalin. The Lenin period, but especially the Stalin period which overlaid it in time, still lives in past institutions and in older leaders. Faulkner somewhere says, "The past isn't dead; it isn't even past." I think that would be a good epigraph for a monograph on my theme.

My point of view is only one of a number of contending points of view in the ongoing debate in the West about Russia's history under Lenin and Stalin. I believe this position is gaining ground, little by little, as research gives rise to interpretation and reinterpretation of what happened in Russia between 1929, when Stalin rose to supreme power, and 1953, when he died. What I would like to do is present some highlights of this interpretation.

The thrust of this interpretation is to put the Soviet Union into Russia, its history into Russia's. This is not to deny the importance of the revolutionary break that occurred in 1917 as a result of the taking of power by Lenin and his Bolshevik Party. However, this interpretation is in line with what has been said by some of my colleagues in their papers. For example, it fits with Professor Kaminski's conclusion in his bibliographical essay—that the pattern of relations between rulers, society, and the individual that had developed in Russia before Peter the Great's reign in the 18th century may be said to have reemerged in an even more apparent manner after the Revolution of 1917.

To put the Soviet Union's history into a Russian frame is my aim. If I had to name a single thinker and a single short volume that charted the way to this emerging interpretation, it is the *émigré* Russian philosopher and historian Nicholas Berdyaev. In his book, *The Origins of Russian Communism*, published in Europe in 1937, he said that in order to understand the phenomenon of Communism, or Bolshevism, the name by which it became known around 1904 among those who adhered to it, we have to see it as two-sided. On the one hand was the internationalist aspect coming from Marxism, which was a European current of thought, a European current of radicalism imported into Russia in the latter part of the 19th century. There was also a Russian side. These two sides came together in the mind of the founder of the Bolshevik Party, Vladimir Ulyanov, who took the name Lenin as his revolutionary pseudonym.

Lenin's Leadership

Bolshevism or Communism in its prepower stage, when it was just one illegal movement among others in the early years of the century, already had a Russian flavor. Although the relatively small number of revolutionaries who took Lenin as their leader were believing Marxists and in that sense gave their allegiance to a theory of revolution that came from the West, the Russian flavor was visible in the movement's founding document—a pamphlet written by Lenin under the title "What Is To Be Done?" He deliberately took as his title that of a novel written in the 1860s by a Russian non-Marxist revolutionary forebear, Nicholas Chernyshevsky, who was imprisoned for his revolutionary thoughts and actions. In the Peter-Paul Fortress in Petersburg in the 1860s Chernyshevsky wrote a revolutionary tract in the form of a novel, *What Is To Be Done?* This work greatly influenced Lenin.

His own "What Is To Be Done?," written in 1902, drew on Russian pre-Marxist lore of revolutionary underground organization. Its theme was how to organize an underground party of committed, dedicated revolutionaries aimed at overthrowing the hated system of tsarism. What was Marxist about this party? It took Marxism as its ideology. But the way in which it should be organized—underground with like-minded, dedicated revolutionaries observing all the rules of underground conspiratorial behavior in order not to be exposed by the tsarist secret police, arrested, and exiled—all this came from the lore of the Russian revolutionary movement that had existed in the 1860s and 1870s. That movement was called the *narodnik* or populist revolutionary movement.

Lenin was a Marxist *narodnik*. Both the West and Russia existed in him. He was quite conscious of this in writing "What Is To Be Done?" It is not an easy pamphlet to read, not a well-organized tract, but arguably the most important single piece of writing in the 20th century in terms of its impact upon history. He argued in it that the Marxists should take the "magnificent organization" that the Russian revolutionaries had in the 1870s as their model.

Lenin also put forth the idea that the revolution that was going to overthrow the tsar in backward Russia would be made possible by building up a mass movement under the aegis of this "vanguard party," which would engage in Marxist propaganda and agitation in small circles. These groups of factory workers, peasants, and students would little by

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little be imbued with Marxist ideas. The party was thought of as a teacher. This party would come to power in backward Russia; and the revolution would spark the way to socialist proletarian revolutions in countries of Western Europe, which, on Marxist principles, were already ripe for socialist revolution. Thus the Russian Revolution and the party leading it could be a vanguard for the whole international revolution.

In 1919, the Third or Communist International, which became known as the Comintern, was formed in Moscow. In a sense, this Comintern institutionalized the old idea of the religious, missionary character of Russia as an orthodox state, the idea that had been expressed by a 15th-century monk in his concept of Moscow as the "Third Rome." Two Romes had fallen, the original Rome and the second Rome in Constantinople, the capital of the eastern Roman empire. Now there only stood orthodox Muscovy, the third Rome, which would not fall. This idea of Muscovy as a model to be emulated by other countries is taken by Berdyaev, and I think quite rightly, as a forerunner of the notion of Moscow as the center of the world revolutionary movement institutionalized by Lenin in the Comintern.

Marxist parties all over Europe thereafter split into two groups: (1) those that adhered to the Comintern, which became known as Communist parties, (2) and those Marxist parties called Social Democratic parties, the moderate and democratic socialist parties that later came to power in places like post-war Germany under Willy Brandt and still exist in Italy, Germany, and elsewhere.

The expected European socialist revolutions did not materialize, and the Bolsheviks found themselves fighting a very bloody civil war from which they emerged victorious in 1920. They then ruled an isolated Russia in what Lenin called a "hostile capitalist encirclement." The country was still agrarian; 85 percent or more of its population were peasants, many of whom could not read or write. Its economic backwardness had been aggravated by the ruination of industry in the devastating civil war between the Whites and the Reds. One of the resulting misfortunes was a very bad famine, particularly in the Volga area in 1921-22, in which help came from an American Relief Administration headed by Herbert Hoover.

In 1921, Lenin recognized that there was no direct way under existing conditions to the socialist or communist society that had been forecast in Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 and that no help was going to be forthcoming from revolutions in the advanced countries of Western Europe. He then persuaded the party oligarchy in charge of the country (the Bolsheviks had suppressed all other political parties, even the Mensheviks, who were the Russian Social Democrats) and through it the whole party to adopt what was called the "New Economic Policy," or NEP. This meant the legalization of small-scale enterprise in industry and the service trades. The state kept control of the banks, transport, mineral resources, and such heavy industry as existed. But the NEP restored a market economy and gave 25 million peasant proprietors the right to till their plots on nationalized land and sell surplus produce to the state contracting organizations or at market in nearby towns.

Under these conditions something like prosperity very quickly came about, so that the Russia of 1925-26 was a far better-off country than it had been in the critical time of 1918-21. The goal remained of transforming "NEP Russia," which was considered to be Soviet but not socialist, into a "socialist Russia." The Soviets, the worker councils that had arisen spontaneously in 1917, were preserved, but controlled by the party members in their executive organs. These Soviets now existed in towns and regions and as national official governing bodies, but they were party-controlled.

Russia was Soviet in its political organization but not yet socialist as Marx and Engels had defined socialism, much less in that still further, more advanced stage that they called communism. Lenin, in articles he wrote in the last two years of his life (he died in January 1924 at the age of 53), left a political testament – advice to the party on the direction to be taken. In it he said that building socialism in Russia would mean creating a country based on cooperative forms of labor, especially in the countryside. In order to persuade – and it had to be done by persuasion, not coercion – the peasantry and people in the towns to work cooperatively, the advantages of cooperation had to be proved to them. Thus, the early mission of the party, propaganda and agitation, set forth in "What Is To Be Done?," came back in his final articles as the new mission of the party – a pedagogical mission that he called "cultural revolution."

What Lenin meant by this was a long, slow, gradual process; he emphasized the word "reformism." The political revolution that brought the party and the Soviets to power was a necessary prerequisite for this rise of cooperative forms of labor. Industrialization, particularly producing tractors, was also an important part of it. In one of his articles in 1919, Lenin had said, "If we had 100,000 tractors, the peasant would say 'I'm for the commune'." What did he mean by this? There were 25 million peasant households; if there were 100,000 tractors, they could only be used cooperatively. The peasants would have to get together and share the tractors, imbuing them with the idea, and giving them the experience, of working cooperatively.

But how to get the 100,000 tractors? For that, it was necessary to rebuild industry in Russia. Lenin's conception of industrialization was heavily based upon the notion of electric power development, which he called "electrification." He became such an enthusiast of electrification that he once spelled it out in a slogan: "Communism Equals the Soviet Power Plus the Electrification of the Whole Country."

Stalin's Rise to Power

In the wake of Lenin's death, the fight for leadership succession was not just over power but over basic directions in policy at home and abroad. The internationalism/Russianism duality reappeared, causing a split in the party. The left opposition adhered to Marxist internationalism, while the rest of the party leadership went in what might be called a "Russia-first" direction.

The left-Marxist internationalists found their foremost leader in Leon Trotsky. The Russia-first position found leading representatives in a heterogeneous group that included Stalin; Alexei Rykov, who was Lenin's successor as head of the government or Council of People's Commissars; Nicholas Bukharin, a leading theorist and editor of the party newspaper *Pravda*; and Mikhail Tomsky, who was chief of the Soviet trade unions. They did not jettison the idea of world Communist revolution or dissolve the Comintern, but they did preach Russia-firstism in the slogan "Socialism in One Country"—the idea of building socialism in an isolated Soviet Russia. This idea originated not with Stalin, who did a great deal to popularize it, but with Rykov and Bukharin. It meant that Russia, while awaiting further development of the international revolution, which was assumed to be inevitable at some point, should and could go it alone in building a socialist society in isolation. Trotsky agreed that they should try to do this but, as a Marxist, held that no final success could be achieved without further progress of revolution abroad. After all, Marx had foreseen the revolution as a global, or at least an all-European, development. Trotsky was thus in the position of seeming to advocate an adventurous course of fomenting revolutions in other countries although in fact he was not an adventurist but a prudent politician.

The Russia-firsters prevailed in the mid-20s, in large part because their approach seemed more persuasive to a younger generation of party members who had never been revolutionaries before 1917 and were linking their rising careers to a Soviet Russian regime that was securely in power. Some of them even had a spirit of "Russian Red patriotism," as a delegate to the Tenth Party Congress in 1921 protestingly referred to it. This delegate from the Ukrainian Republic, V. P. Zatonsky, died in Stalin's Terror of the later 1930s. Zatonsky protested that some of the Bolshevik emissaries in the outlying republics, the minority nations mainly living in the borderlands, were infected with the spirit of Russian Red patriotism and were acting, he said, like the tsarist viceroys who had ruled those areas before 1917.

These events show that Marxism or Communism *can* be fused with a Russian national outlook. That is a point of such great importance that I cannot stress it too strongly. There has long been a belief in many minds, both Western and Russian émigré, that Communism and nationalism are completely incompatible. This notion is mistaken. History has shown that these two things can be combined—not only in Russia, but also in China, where Mao and his party came to power in a revolution in 1949 and fused Communism with Chinese nationalism, and in other countries.

In the Russian case, the left opposition was vanquished politically and expelled from the party in 1927. Trotsky was banished first to a distant place in Soviet Russia and then to Turkey in 1929. The Russia-firsters prevailed, only to become involved almost immediately in a terrible new internecine fight over the direction to be taken.

The Rykov/Bukharin/Tomsky faction, now stigmatized as "Right deviationists," were the moderates among the Russia-first Bolsheviks. The nationalism with which they fused their Marxism was a benign Russianism which saw in the age-old village commune (the *mir*, as it was called in Russia) a nucleus around which they could build an "agrarian-cooperative socialism," as Bukharin called it. They also thought industrialization was very important, as Lenin had said. They felt, however, that it had to be a gradual process because they did not have the wherewithal to industrialize speedily. They also believed it was particularly important to develop light industry along with heavy industry. This would allow them to provide consumer goods to the peasants, thereby giving them incentive to turn over their produce to the state.

Consequently, the moderate Russia-firsters went along the lines of the articles that Lenin wrote towards the end of his life. They did not discard the idea of world revolution, but they played down fomenting revolution abroad because they wanted material aid from the Western democracies to develop backward Russia. They knew that pressing world revolution in practical politics would result in such bad relations that no help would be forthcoming.

Stalin, who echoed these moderate positions in the common fight against the Trotskyist opposition, now began to show his true colors. He was not really a rightist, or if he was, he was a radical rightist. His Bolshevik revolutionism was fused with a different kind of Russianism, a Great Russian chauvinist outlook. In contrast to the benign Russian nationalism of Rykov, Bukharin, Tomsky, and others, Stalin's form of nationalism was a strident, chauvinistic Russian outlook. I call this fusion *Russian National Bolshevism*, which in my view is the phrase that best describes what Stalinism meant in his time.

Many foreign observers and some scholars, then and later, have thought Stalin's preaching of socialism in one country was a purely pragmatic political tactic. It did have pragmatic political uses in mobilizing support, particularly among the younger party cohort, but it was also a Russian Red patriotism in which Stalin believed. As a biographer of Stalin, I think that it expressed his actual outlook as a man of non-Russian (Georgian) ethnic origin with a sense of pride in his Russian identity. Once, in Moscow in 1946, I heard Stalin's voice transmitted over the radio. I could hear the Georgian accent of his Russian: he could not open his mouth without revealing that he was not really a Russian. Yet I think he desperately needed to feel himself to be Russian and for others to see him so.

How did this happen? When Stalin read Lenin's "What Is to Be Done?" in 1903 or 1904, he became completely converted to Lenin, who was for him an identity figure. Lenin was a quintessential Russian radical type, who represented all that Stalin, who was about 24 years old in 1904, wanted to be. If Lenin was Russian, Stalin wanted to be Russian, and he thought of himself all his life long as a Russian like Lenin. When it came time to take a revolutionary pseudonym, as everybody did, he (Iosif Djugashvili) adopted a Russian name, "Stalin." It was not a usual Russian name; interestingly, it is a homonym of "Lenin." It also comes from the word *stal* (steel), so "man of steel."

Lenin was genuinely an internationalist as well as a Russian. He discovered the reality of Stalin's Great Russian chauvinism too late. He had thought that Stalin, as a person of minority origin, would be a good man to head the new Commissariat of Nationality Affairs, whose task was to work out policy toward the non-Russian nationalities. In this role, Stalin dealt with the non-Russian nationalities, particularly his own Georgian nation, in a crude and even brutal way. In 1921 Georgia was forcibly incorporated into the Union by the Red Army. Stalin supervised this incorporation, handling matters in Georgia so roughly that when it came to Lenin's attention (Georgians wrote to him about it), he became incensed.

At this point, Lenin was concerned about the succession problem and was writing a letter to the party congress that was to be held in April 1923. While writing it (in December 1922), he was going over various possible candidates for the leadership of the party – Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Stalin (who had become powerful already in an administrative post as General Secretary of the Central Committee). Lenin decided that Stalin was, as he put it in a postscript to this letter, "too rude." This quality, the postscript said further, is intolerable in a man who has such power as the General Secretary does. The comrades should therefore remove Comrade Stalin from this position.

In other words, Lenin wanted to shift Stalin to a lesser post. Before he could see to this, he had an incapacitating stroke in March 1923. He could not attend the party congress, and his letter was not disclosed to the party leadership until after he died in 1924. His widow, Nadezhda Krupskaya, disclosed the letter to top party leaders, who decided to disregard Lenin's postscript on the advisability of removing Stalin. Party leaders were already involved in a factional struggle. Grigory Zinoviev and Liev Kamenev, who were afraid of Trotsky's becoming the chief leader, teamed up with Stalin to force the leadership to disregard Lenin's warning. It was one of the great mistakes of the 20th century.

Stalin's Revolution from Above

Stalin's Great Russian chauvinism was historically momentous. It led him to a conception of policy that prevailed in the 1930s, after he had defeated the moderates and expelled them from positions of power. It was momentous because the programmatic idea of building socialism took on for him the meaning of building up Russia into a militarily powerful state able to fend for itself in a hostile international encirclement and eventually export its system to neighboring countries during a war that he took to be historically imminent.

In developing this line of thought, Stalin took leaves from the book of Russian history. My research has led me to the conclusion that Stalin was something of a reader, not just the nuts-and-bolts politician he was and is widely perceived as having been. He was particularly interested in Russian history. He saw from his reading that old Muscovy, also isolated in an international setting, had built up its military power through centralizing the state, developing an autocracy, and taking command of its human resources through the obligations of the different orders of society to render service to the state. Thus, the nobility had to render service in the armed forces or the bureaucracy. The peasantry, which became enserfed in the 17th century, had to render service by providing produce for their landowners. They were tied to the land; they could not move from the village where they owed service obligations. As each of the population groups had its form of state service, it was a compulsory-service society that developed in Muscovy in the period from the 15th to the 18th centuries.

This state-building process, as one may call it, struck Stalin as intensely relevant to the needs of Soviet Russia in the 1930s. It is a remarkable idea that a process that unfolded in history over a number of centuries could and should be repeated in the period of a decade – but that was Stalin's idea. He believed that Russia needed to industrialize in a great hurry. Being poor as well as isolated, it could only do that, Stalin thought, by bringing peasant Russia into collectives from which the state could extract grain and other produce for the needs of the army and for export to pay for the foreign technology that would be imported in the service of a war-oriented industrialization emphasizing the building of heavy industry: iron, steel, coal, tanks, tractors, trucks. Since this bringing of the peasantry into collectives needed to be done in a hurry, it would be a revolutionary process: a revolution from above under state auspices.

This Stalin conceived of as his "October," his way of emulating and even outdoing Lenin as a revolutionary leader. Whereas Lenin was a revolutionary from below, he would be a revolutionary from above. Meanwhile, foreign policy would encourage division of Europe into hostile coalitions of states in preparation for the new world war that Stalin took to be historically inevitable. He hoped it would be one in which a militarily strong Soviet Russia would remain neutral while opposing coalitions of states were engaged in a long and bloody struggle similar to the World War of 1914-18. At a time of Soviet choosing, he said in a speech of 1925 (first published in his collected works in 1947), it would enter.

Late in 1929, Stalin acted on his policy conception by pressuring the peasants into joining the collectives, the *kolkhozy*. He set out to do it not in the space of a decade, as outlined in the five-year plan approved by the party earlier that year. The plan called for collectivization of 17 percent of the sown area at the end of the five years, a relatively moderate pace. Stalin decided that much of collectivization would be done between the gathering of the harvest in 1929 and the spring sowing in 1930. He would use the winter months of 1929-30 to break the back of resistance to collectivization.

How was this done? A slogan was proclaimed: "Liquidation of the kulaks as a class." Who were the kulaks? They were the relatively better-off peasants in the villages who managed, perhaps, to hire a few people seasonally to help them and their families work the few hectares of land that they possessed. The kulaks were a small minority, 3 percent at most. The slogan made them out to be the "village bourgeoisie," and efforts were made to incite the poor and middle peasants against them. The middle peasants lived with the kulaks, however, and many were little distinguished from them, so it was hard to tell who were kulaks. The party-state sent in police detachments backed up by army detachments. They obtained lists of those often arbitrarily classified as kulaks. Anybody, poor or middle peasant, who showed reluctance to join the *kolkhozy* was labeled a "kulak accomplice."

The peasants were ordered to turn over their implements, livestock – everything except their huts and clothing – to the collective. They did not want to do this, seeing it as a revival of serfdom, which is essentially what it was. To terrorize the peasants into submission, those classified as "kulaks" and their families were herded into boxcars and sent off on journeys of a month or longer to distant places in the east, in Siberia, or in the far north to fell trees to be exported as timber or to build plants.

Since the industrialization was war-oriented, it sought to build up the eastern part of the country because the western part was more vulnerable in the event of war. Because Siberia had a lot of coal and the Urals had a lot of iron, these places became focal areas for industrialization. Few people wanted to go to these inclement regions, however. So about two million "kulaks" plus family members, many of whom died en route, were sent to build barracks for themselves and start work building plants.

The deportation scenes were so horrifying that the other peasants in the villages agreed to sign up for the *kolkhozy*. Then they did something Stalin had failed to foresee. The peasants joined the *kolkhozy*, but before entering, they slaughtered much of their livestock. Why should peasants turn over their pigs, sheep, cows, and chickens to the hated institution they were being terrorized into joining?

That slaughter of livestock, which destroyed a large percentage of Russia's total stock, and a bad crop year in 1931 led to a famine from 1932-34, the worst in Russia's famine-plagued history. It is estimated that at least four to five million people, and possibly many more, died in that famine. They were village people: many in the agriculturally rich Ukraine, where resistance to collectivization was very strong; in the agriculturally rich Kuban region; and in the Volga and other rural areas. The grain that was produced was appropriated by the state authorities and turned over to the needs of industrialization. Millions of tons were exported, this during the Depression when world grain prices were very low.

The Soviet government obtained foreign currency by selling grain, timber, and other goods. The foreign currency so obtained was used to import foreign technicians, engineers, and machinery. Machines were bought from Germany, the United States, France, Italy, from all over. Foreign technicians, including some Americans, were willing to go to Russia where there were jobs; they received good pay, largely via sale of grain taken away from starving peasants. Consequently, Stalin's regime tried to keep the famine a secret, and there was no Herbert Hoover and no American Relief Administration as there had been during the famine of 1921-22. The controlled Soviet press did not report on the famine. However, foreign workers who left Russia and later wrote their memoirs described the starving people coming in from the countryside and begging for food on the streets of the cities. The authorities tried to keep the peasants off the streets. They died in the villages by the hundreds of thousands. Unfortunately, some foreign correspondents in Russia failed to report conditions in the villages that they knew about, even if they didn't know about them in detail.

By 1933-34 collectivization had succeeded, but at such a fearful human cost that the country was deeply weakened in ways that affected the drive to prepare for war; peasant morale, for example, was abysmally low. Meanwhile, industrialization proceeded at so rapid a pace that vast waste resulted. There was a huge expansion of the concentration camp empire populated primarily by the so-called kulaks. Hence, the Gulag empire was a mushrooming development of the Stalinist 1930s. In the 1920s, there were relatively few political prisoners in Russia and no sizeable concentration camp system. The mass use of prisoners as forced laborers was part of Stalin's revolution from above.

Some Soviet historians and some of our economic historians have come to the conclusion that the entire war-preparation effort that Stalin staged in the 1930s was a gigantic mistake. Economic historians have concluded that balanced economic growth, more or less along the lines that the Bolshevik moderates had advocated following Lenin's guidelines, would have resulted in comparable economic development without the terrible tragedies that Stalin's policies caused. Nevertheless, by the mid-1930s, Stalin was boasting that socialism had now been achieved. However, Russians, save for the privileged stratum of bureaucrats at the top, were living far more poorly than they had under the NEP. Under NEP, there was no food rationing in Russia. It was reintroduced in 1930, as it had been during the civil war, and was not ended until 1935. Yet at this very time—just after the end of food rationing when people were living more poorly than they had in the 1930s—Stalin declared that socialism had been achieved.

To the Lenin generation of old revolutionaries, this new society was not a socialist one, properly speaking, because socialism connoted to their minds a modicum of prosperity, relative equality of its distribution, and less, rather than more, bureaucracy. Soviet history under Stalin had gone in the opposite direction. Criticism of Stalin was therefore rife in party circles around 1933, especially during the famine.

In early 1934 came the Seventeenth Party Congress, at the end of which a new Central Committee would be elected. The Central Committee would then form a new Politburo and confirm a General Secretary. Some local party leaders who came to Moscow to take part in the congress decided the time had come to carry out Lenin's testament and remove Stalin as General Secretary.

These leaders had a candidate for Stalin's replacement, an extremely popular figure, Sergei Kirov, the party boss in Leningrad. Leningrad was one of the great industrial centers. All over the country, party secretaries were aware of receiving machines and parts from Leningrad industries. Kirov, who was an excellent speaker, a tough Bolshevik but not a tyrannical Stalin type, therefore became a very important figure nationwide. Consequently, the party leaders wanting to unseat Stalin thought of Kirov as his replacement. But Kirov, to whom they spoke privately on the eve of the congress, refused to go along, and the cabal came to nothing. Stalin, however, learned about it. His response was to plan a terroristic great purge, which was touched off by the assassination of Kirov in his Leningrad headquarters on December 1, 1934.

On that event not all historians are in agreement. Many of us, myself included, feel that evidence on record makes it possible to say beyond reasonable doubt that Stalin himself, via his agents in the secret police, was responsible for Kirov's murder. He then accused erstwhile party opponents, notably Zinoviev, Kamenev, and the exiled Trotsky, of having conspired to murder Kirov as preparation for the murder of Stalin himself and the overthrow of the Soviet regime.

Then the Great Purge of 1934-39 was on. Millions of Communists and others were victimized. Scholars still dispute the exact numbers. Some estimates are that between four and five million were arrested, including up to two million party members and previously expelled party members. Of those arrested, something like five or six hundred thousand were shot. Those who weren't shot (with the exception of a small number who were released) were sent to work camps in distant areas.

Conditions for the prisoners in the camps were worsened by orders from Stalin, who by this time was reigning autocratically. No one could or did oppose him. Prisoners received 500 grams of bread or gruel for a ten- to twelve-hour working day of heavy physical labor, seven days a week, often in temperatures of -30° F. As you might guess, the average life of a camp inmate under those conditions has been estimated by a former inmate who survived at something like six months. The camps in 1937-39 became death camps for many. Only a small proportion of those arrested and sent to camps survived to be rehabilitated after Stalin died. When Khrushchev denounced Stalin in his secret speech of 1956, these people were found to have been innocent all along. There never was a conspiracy.

At the time, Stalin's servile functionaries rewrote party history. The new version depicted the victimized people as anti-party, anti-state conspirators, and Stalin himself as the modern Lenin he believed himself to be. Hence, although a great break occurred in the continuity of development of Soviet Russia in the 1930s, it was not admitted. Stalin was portrayed as the man who had realized Lenin's designs, who had built the socialism that Lenin merely envisaged. He was portrayed in the arts and in the media as a genius leader, in what has come to be called the "cult of personality," meaning the Stalin cult.

What in fact happened? Some scholars look at Stalin as a great modernizer who used barbaric methods to bring Russia into the 20th century. He sent the nation to school. During the 1930s industrialization and urbanization took place; these were forms of modernizing. There is another point of view, of which I am an adherent. Certainly, the nation was sent to school, especially vocational school for technical training. Certainly, industry expanded, and many peasants came into the city. All these processes did occur, but they occurred in a reversion to a state-building, autocracy-building process reminiscent of what occurred much earlier in Russia's history. From this standpoint, Stalin is not rightly seen as a modernizer. Not only was his policy line a reversion to the past, but in some ways he can be seen as a counterrevolutionary. Virtually an entire political generation, Lenin's generation of Old Bolsheviks, was wiped out in Stalin's Great Purge. Yet he never admitted, probably not even to himself, that there were counterrevolutionary aspects of the revolution from above over which he presided. He seems to have considered himself the real Bolshevik and fulfiller of Lenin's designs that his court flatterers proclaimed him to be.

World War II

While this was going on inside the country, Stalin was actively pursuing a foreign policy aimed at helping the new world war break out between two coalitions, with Russia remaining neutral. The path to his goal was laid through secret diplomacy with Hitler's Germany; as a result, in August 1939, he and Hitler concluded a non-aggression pact to which was attached, although the world did not know it at the time, a secret accord on the division of Eastern Europe. The secret accord was found among German documents at the end of World War II, and the materials were published by the U.S. State Department in 1947 in a booklet called *Nazi-Soviet Relations*. The non-aggression agreement provided Hitler with a guarantee against the spectre of a two-front war. Knowing that there would be no war yet in the east, he opened World War II by invading Poland in September 1939; Stalin's army subsequently marched into eastern Poland—under the terms of the secret accord—and took it over. Later Stalin took over the three small Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; took Bessarabia from Romania; and embarked on a war against Finland after it refused to comply with his demands for territorial and other concessions. The Winter War of 1939-40 with little Finland was a bitter one. Stalin's forces had been gravely weakened by the bloodbath in the Red Army that the Great Purge included. At length, Russia prevailed.

What upset Stalin's calculations was France's swift collapse under the onslaught of Hitler's Blitzkrieg in May 1940. This made Hitler the master of the European continent, with a friendly Spain under Franco (whom he had supported in the Spanish Civil War) and an ally in Mussolini's Italy. Thereupon, Hitler prepared for the invasion of Russia, which took place in late June 1941. Stalin, for whom all this was an unexpected development of the most fearful proportion, had evidently counted on France—which was thought to have the strongest army in the world as well as the Maginot Line—being able to hold out for three or four years while Russia recovered from the ravages of the Great Purge. The new generation of people promoted to take the places of highly placed victims of the purge was still relatively young and inexperienced. Hence, the country was not well prepared for war.

Stalin went into a panic, a virtual nervous breakdown, for a short time. The Soviet people were kept in ignorance of this until Khrushchev brought it up in February 1956, in his initially secret speech to the Soviet Party Congress. (The speech soon became widely known in the Soviet Union, although it has never been published there. A copy smuggled

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out via one of the East European countries was published in *The New York Times* on June 5, 1956.)

The Soviet people were also kept in ignorance of the fact that Stalin made monumental blunders as commander-in-chief. Above all, his troop dispositions on the war's eve were catastrophic. He ordered destruction of strong, fortified lines of defense that had been built at great cost and effort along the pre-1939 frontier before he moved into eastern Poland. He moved a large proportion of his 170 divisions into border zones 50 to 100 kilometres east of this new line, which was largely unfortified.

Germany invaded on June 22, 1941 with 190 divisions (153 of them German divisions, including 17 tank divisions and 13 motorized ones), about 5,000 airplanes, and 3,200 tanks. To make matters still worse, Stalin insisted for the first day or so that his local commanders' reports that the Germans were making war on Russia were a provocation; he refused to give orders to fight back. Germany invaded Russia, and the Russian Army did not get instant orders to resist!

By then, it was too late to prevent military catastrophe. Hundreds of thousands were encircled, cut off, and taken prisoner by the fast-advancing Germans. When some survivors were returned to Russia after the war, they were sent to camps as traitors. The real culprit was Stalin, whose blunders led to the mass surrender. When, finally, this "man of steel" – who was a coward as well as a sickly, self-adulating murderous tyrant – came to himself sufficiently to take charge of military operations, he called on the people to resist the invasion as their patriotic duty. He did not summon them to fight for Soviet socialism, but for mother Russia. The war itself was officially christened the "Great Patriotic War" – a deliberate use of the name that had been given to the war against Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812, the "Fatherland War."

And the people? According to the research of historian Alexander Dallin, based on captured German documents that were brought to the United States after the war, the popular attitude was one of watchful waiting as the Germans penetrated into the country, aiming to take Moscow and Leningrad before the onset of winter and to drive the remaining Soviet forces back to the Ural Mountains. Many Russians had not believed propaganda about the Nazis being barbarians because they had always thought of Europeans, including Germans, as "cultured" people. Many on collective farms were waiting to be liberated from them. Hitler and his Nazi helpers treated the Russians as *Untermenschen*, slaves of Germany. They even preserved the *kolkhozy* as means of extracting peasant produce cheaply.

So the Russians and people of other Soviet nationalities, many of whom were fed up with the "socialism" that Stalin stood for, finally went to war under new, younger commanders. They went to war for their country, not for socialism, as many thought abroad. One of their reasons for supporting the war was that they were in it with two western democracies, Great Britain and America. The Russians cherished good will toward both these nations. In addition, the U.S. lend-lease program provided them with not only munitions, Studebaker trucks, military equipment, and jeeps, which they called "willys," but also canned food called "Spam," which kept a great many civilians as well as soldiers alive during a time of great privation.

In December 1941, the first Russian counteroffensive finally stopped the Germans, who were by then near the outskirts of Moscow. Stalin drew on Siberian troops who had been held in reserve east of Moscow. Some of these troops were older men who had fought in World War I and remembered what it was to fight the Germans. They were expert marksmen, these men from Siberia. So the Germans were driven back in early December 1941, suffering their first significant defeat in World War II. While they came close to taking Leningrad, they failed. The most they could do was surround and blockade it. Great numbers of people starved in the city during the 900-day seige. The battle of Stalingrad on the Volga in 1942 was the turning point in the war. The Allies' invasion of southern Europe in 1943 and the second front in France in 1944 made the outcome a foregone conclusion.

During the war, to solidify popular support, Stalin and his regime gave the people to understand that when the war was over, things were going to be better. They did this not by statements in the press, but by putting rumors into the grapevine, which is the way Russians get their real news. The Americans, according to these rumors, would be invited after the war to open department stores in Russian cities. Farmers would be allowed to leave the collectives. Meanwhile, during the war they were allowed surreptitiously to expand their private garden plots, which helped to feed Russia. This produce they could use for their families; any surplus they could sell. Students, it was further rumored, would be allowed to study abroad, and the atmosphere for writers and other artists would be freer. People thought these things would happen when the war was over and the "hostile capitalist encirclement" was a thing of the past. Relations with the Allies, they also thought, would remain close in a post-war period of growing abundance and greater freedom.

May 1945 was for Russia the real end of the war, because the subsequent brief campaign against Japan in Manchuria was undertaken when Japan, struck by the atom bombs, was reeling and capitulating. When the German capitulation was signed in Berlin on May 9, 1945, Russia was jubilant. Red Square was aswirl with happy people, milling around, smiling, congratulating one another and anyone in uniform. I was an attache at the American Embassy in Moscow then. Our embassy stood right across the street from Red Square. I walked into Red Square and heard a young Red Army officer saying exultantly to nobody in particular, "Now it's time to live." Russians by the thousands came to our embassy. Great throngs of them stood outside, just looking up (it was a six-story building). They didn't shout slogans; there weren't any placards or posters; it wasn't an official event. It was something almost unthinkable in Stalin's Russia – a spontaneous demonstration, a demonstration of gratitude to this country that had stood by Russia's side at its darkest hour and provided food and munitions to help it survive.

I have never forgotten that sight and the feelings aroused in me and all of us then in the embassy, as well as those feelings demonstrated toward us. I remember how our minister-counselor, George Kennan, who spoke Russian quite fluently, stepped out onto a window pedestal and addressed the huge crowd in Russian, congratulating them on our common victory.

The Cold War

Then what? Then nothing. All the hopes were dashed. It was back to Stalinism as usual. It wasn't "time to live." It was a time to prepare all over again for the possibility of another great war which, as Stalin said in his major post-war speech of February 9, 1946, was an inevitable likelihood given the continued existence of what he called "imperialism." At least three or four more five-year plans were needed, he said, to guarantee against "all contingencies." A Russian of the older generation, in whose apartment I sat as this speech was being transmitted, put his head down on his folded arms on the table as he heard those words. I believe that all over Russia people, figuratively speaking, were doing the same. It was the end of hopes for a better post-war period.

That speech signaled the beginning of the Cold War against the erstwhile allies in the West. It is interesting that Winston Churchill's speech at Fulton, Missouri, in which he spoke of the "Iron Curtain" coming down across the middle of Europe and which has been taken by some scholars as a declaration of the Cold War, occurred a month later, in March 1946.

Instead of the promised liberty in a world of danger over, with no more hostile encirclement, there came, in Russia, a renewed period of tension and growing terror. Those postwar years saw rising, officially inspired anti-Semitism; the rebridling of literature and the arts under the aegis of Stalin's lieutenant, Zhdanov; the return to privation as consumer goods were again slighted in favor of heavy industry's growth; and a new program to overtake the United States on the atom-bomb front. The Gulag empire further expanded as Stalin deported into the interior entire small nationalities because a few of their members in occupied German territory had collaborated with the occupiers. According to Khrushchev in the secret speech of 1956, Stalin would have deported the entire Ukrainian people, who had provided some collaborators, but for the fact that there were too many – 25,000,000 – of them and there was no place to which they could be deported.

In all this, I have depicted Stalin as a sort of monster, a vicious tyrant, and in various ways a terrible blunderer in policy. I believe he was those things, but he was something else besides. He was a genius in the art of power politics, a genius of manipulation, a great political actor who knew how to twist opponents around his fingers by deceiving them as to his intentions. He did this before the war with his internal politics of combatting the opposition. He did it during the war in his diplomacy with the Allies.

He was a genius at the art of power politics for his state as well as for himself. He managed to deceive Franklin D. Roosevelt and, to a lesser extent, Churchill about his post-war intentions. They assumed, as had the public, that what he needed was what they were prepared to grant: a security zone, an environment of small Finlands allowed to be free internally, not menacing Russia as before World War II. They were ready to cede Stalin a security sphere in Eastern Europe. They were not prepared for what happened, which was the ruthless *Gleichschaltung* (to use the Nazi word), the bringing into Soviet shape the Russian-occupied land in Eastern Europe: Poland, East Germany, Romania, Bulgaria, and soon Hungary and Czechoslovakia. On them were imposed Soviet-managed satellite states called "people's democracies." Strong-arm methods were used in the process. The effect was to strengthen the forces of anti-Sovietism in the West. The behavior of Stalin after the war, culminating in the Berlin Blockade of 1948-49 and the Korean War, which was begun by North Korea with Stalin's assistance in June 1950, greatly worsened the growing tension of the time.

How can we explain Stalin's post-war expansionism into neighboring lands? As I see it, we must go back to the understanding of the Stalin phenomenon as Russian National Bolshevism. Stalin was a Russian nationalist, but also a Bolshevik revolutionist of a special kind. He didn't just intend to have a security sphere in the countries occupied by the Red Army after the war. He wanted an expanded Russo-Communist empire, and that is what he built.

Westerners, not understanding the Stalin phenomenon as Russian National Bolshevism, were unprepared for this. Some thought that pristine Bolshevik revolutionism was reviving, but it was not. For example, Stalin, the Russian National Bolshevik, did not want a Communist revolution to take place in independent Yugoslavia, which it did because the Yugoslav Communist partisans came to power on their own. Communist Yugoslavia under Josef Tito was resolved to rule itself. As a result, Stalin broke with Tito in 1948, subjecting Yugoslavia to a little cold war that lasted until Stalin died. He did not want China to have a Communist revolution because he knew that Russia could not control such a huge country as China for very long. So in 1945, according to Mao Ze Dong's now-published diary, Stalin advised him not to go forward with a full-scale Communist revolution in China. Stalin wanted replicas of Soviet Russia under his firm control elsewhere. His Russian National Bolshevism, in my view, was a major underlying cause of the Cold War. Some scholars believe that he was moderating his course around 1950, as things were getting terribly tense in East-West relations. Others, myself included, disagree. As one American who was in Moscow at the time, I can testify that we felt no lessening of tension, either inside Russia or in Russia's relations with the West, during the awful last period of Stalin's life.

When he died on March 5, 1953, a whole period of history, in Russia and the world, died with him. Today his malignant Stalinism is dead. Yet the great structure of centralized, party-state bureaucratic rule that he built and the imperial sphere that he forged in neighboring lands still stand. As a result, the country that he ruled is in a critical internal condition that goes back, in many ways, to the events we have discussed. Yet, under the reform leadership of an able younger leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, Russia's history is again on the move – this time in a hopeful direction.

THE SOVIET UNION SINCE 1953

by Vojtech Mastny

For most Soviet citizens, the period since Stalin's death in 1953 is still more their living present than history. History implies finality, and much of what has happened during the three decades since the end of the Stalin era remains open-ended. This is not to say merely that too much has been happening and that events are in flux. At issue rather is the viewing of the change that has taken place in a proper historical perspective, a task that has been difficult for Western interpreters of the Soviet scene.

An outside observer with a conservative bent is apt to emphasize the persistence of the past, thus making the present seem hardly less grim and menacing than the situation was under Stalin. The Soviet Union has remained, after all, an oppressive authoritarian state, ruled by a regime ostensibly dedicated to the militant Marxist-Leninist ideology and aggressively hostile to the West. Moreover, the Soviet leaders themselves have always been inclined to seek reassurance in insisting upon the continuity and constancy of their system. Yet too much emphasis on the continuity of development risks underestimating the extent to which changes that elsewhere might seem trivial have influenced the actual functioning of that rigid system.

In contrast, an interpreter of liberal persuasion is likely to underestimate how much the Soviet Union, despite all the departures from Stalinism that have occurred, still continues to differ from other countries. It is comforting to presume, but difficult to prove, that the differences have been diminishing, as the advocates of the "convergence theory" believe. Nor is it very enlightening to proceed from the premise that the Russians, regardless of their regime, are first and foremost human beings, with the same fundamental aspirations as everyone else. Such a truism marks merely the beginning, but hardly the end, of a serious scholarly inquiry. For historians, who are more attuned than political scientists to the uniqueness of social phenomena, the differences, rather than the similarities, among nations provide the often-critical clues for the understanding of what happened and why.

In the last analysis, the fundamental differences concern the politics—the manner in which social, economic, intellectual, and other conditions determine the power relations within and between organized societies. The Soviets, too, see in their particular, presumably superior, sociopolitical system the crucial distinction that sets their country apart from any other. Even those who may disagree with this value judgment must at least admit that both the ideology that has inspired the system and the institutions that the system has created have indeed been quite unique.

The Role of Ideology

No other question has been more vexing for foreigners than whether Soviet behavior is determined by the regime's professed commitment to the ideological goals of Marxism-Leninism or by more realistic considerations derived from the pursuit of power. For the Soviets, the question itself is false; in their opinion, there is no dichotomy between the reality and the ideology which, on the contrary, provides the only "scientific" basis for the conduct of policy. Yet history has shown that the difficulty of reconciling the tenets of Marxism-Leninism with the realities of the modern world has in fact repeatedly compelled Moscow to modify the doctrine, the policies, or both.

Two generations since the Bolshevik revolution, the ideology no longer provides the fiery inspiration that set the goals of policy during the revolutionary infancy of the Soviet state. It continues to perform other vital functions, however. First, by positing the historical inevitability of "socialism," it bestows legitimacy on a government that calls itself socialist but refuses to submit its performance to the judgment of its people. Second, Marxism-Leninism provides the Soviet leaders with a ready-made conceptual framework through which they analyze and interpret their political environment. The coherence and simplicity of the doctrine are great assets; its rigidity and presumptiousness are liabilities in trying to understand correctly anything that does not fit easily into the narrow Marxist categories that exaggerate the role of material interests and conflicts. Finally, ideological preconceptions have shaped some of the key institutions on which the Soviet system has been resting: the single ruling party, the secret police, collective agriculture. For all these reasons, even if the Marxist ideology has ceased to be the dynamic force it had once been, the developments since Stalin's death suggest that it cannot be discarded without putting into question the very survival of the Soviet state in its established form.

The Stalinist Legacy

More than a third of a century after Stalin's death, the main Soviet institutions are still those inherited from him. What has changed are the policies and procedures, as well as the personalities. Evidently, once the tyrant was gone, no one else could possibly manage in the same way the system of terror he had created and tailored closely to his personality. Nor did his successors, having had firsthand experience with the murderous effects of the system on those nearest to him, have a desire to keep it intact. Yet neither did they wish to dismantle it in a manner that might endanger their own power.

The desirability and limitations of reform have been the central themes of Soviet politics since Stalin. Changing the policies and procedures without altering fundamental institutions made any reform reversible. This enabled the Soviet Union's self-appointed and self-perpetuating elite to maintain its power. In the meantime, however, the world around it has changed, sharpening the dilemma of reform for every successive generation.

The adaptation of the Stalinist legacy to changing times has been complicated by the Soviet Union's passage to a higher, qualitatively different stage of economic development, paralleled by its growth as a superpower aspiring not only to its empire in Eastern Europe but to global primacy as well. The state of the Soviet economy, while of crucial significance for the domestic functioning of the regime, has been of relatively little import to other nations because of Moscow's exceedingly modest share in the overall world trade. The international behavior of the Soviet superpower, however, has become a paramount concern of our time. Accordingly, foreign policy topics also loom much larger in the history of the post-Stalin era than they previously did.

The era may be divided into three periods, each marked by the ascendancy of particular leaders. After the transitional years of leadership struggle from 1953-55, the decade of 1955-64 came to be dominated by the forceful personality of Nikita S. Khrushchev, the most prominent reformer the Soviet Union had produced so far. His overthrow was followed by a period of consolidation under General Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev. Although Brezhnev lived until 1983, important new developments, including his progressing incapacitation, justify the choice of 1975 as a watershed indicating the onset of a third period, which future historians are likely to view as that of the Soviet Union's incipient decline. The period began with an unprecedented and protracted leadership weakness in the Kremlin, which was terminated only in 1985 after the appointment of Mikhail S. Gorbachev as General Secretary.

The Period of Reform (1953–1964)

Beria. The first few months after Stalin's end witnessed an intense struggle among his heirs, the particulars of which still remain obscure. The most prominent among the contestants, who included Foreign Minister Viacheslav M. Molotov, Party Secretary Nikita S. Khrushchev, and Premier Georgii M. Malenkov, was initially Stalin's former security chief and fellow Georgian, Lavrentii P. Beria, linked by significant though circumstantial evidence with a possible conspiracy aimed at precipitating Stalin's death.

Fragmentary but plausible allusions by Beria's rivals, particularly Khrushchev, also associated him retrospectively with attempted policy initiatives which, if implemented, could have amounted to radical departures from Stalin's legacy. Most notably, they concerned possible accommodation with the West in Europe by means of concessions in Germany and a transformation of the Soviet Union into more of a genuine federation, in which the different non-Russian nationalities would have greater say than before.

It is uncertain whether there were any significant clashes over these issues; what is certain is that any further enhancement of the arbitrary powers of a man already in command of the secret police who, moreover, had been instrumental in perpetrating some of the worst excesses of Stalinism, was intolerable to the rest of the Soviet leadership. The accounts of Beria's disappearance range from a shoot-out in the Kremlin to secret execution in the cellar of the Moscow police headquarters. In any case, by the end of 1953 he had been summarily liquidated – the last in the long procession of prominent Soviet personalities whose political demise meant physical death as well.

Malenkov. The disposal of Beria heralded the incipient, though slow and always reversible, repudiation of Stalinist practices. These still characterized the suppression of the first significant disturbances that followed Stalin's death as early as the summer of 1953: revolts in the slave labor camp of Vorkuta, in the Czechoslovak city of Pilsen, and, on the largest scale, in East Germany. All these events testify to how vulnerable the Stalinist system had become to pent-up pressures by the oppressed populace once the tyrant was gone.

The "new course" of Premier Malenkov sought to allay the pressures by proclaiming greater concern for the needs of the consumer. Abroad, Moscow signaled a new willingness to reduce the tensions of the Cold War by facilitating the conclusion of an armistice in the Korean War. In a notable reversal of the previous Soviet posture, Malenkov also declared that a nuclear war, far from precipitating the victory of socialism over capitalism as Stalin had posited, would rather bring about a disaster for all humankind that must be avoided.

However, Malenkov's position in a ruling group steeped in intrigue and still unaccustomed to governing collectively remained precarious, as the problems he faced proved too overwhelming for him to handle. Even modest departures from the traditional emphasis on heavy industry and a tentative initiative toward accommodation in Europe – again vaguely hinting at possible concessions on Germany – made Malenkov vulnerable. In February 1955, he was removed from premiership – though not expelled from the party or the Politburo – by a coalition headed by Khrushchev and Molotov, who criticized Malenkov's shortcomings from Stalinist premises. The coalition soon fell apart, as Khrushchev outmaneuvered Molotov while moving gradually toward positions previously held by Malenkov. In important ways, he was ready to go farther in promoting both reform at home and accommodation abroad.

Khrushchev and the First Détente. The surprising foreign policy debut of the new regime, still implemented by Molotov, was Moscow's agreement to the establishment of neutral Austria. This reversed longstanding Soviet opposition to such a solution, which resulted in the withdrawal of both Soviet and Western armed forces from a part of Europe they had occupied since World War II. In response to the perceived threat of an incorporation of the Western-controlled parts of Austria into the NATO defense system, which was about to be strengthened by the newly rearmed West Germany, the substantive and precipitous Soviet concession set the stage for a "first détente." In July 1955, this culminated in the Geneva great powers summit, the first such meeting since the onset of the Cold War.

Raising the question of not only military but also political disengagement in Europe, the advent of Austrian neutrality coincided with the signing of the Warsaw Pact alliance one day before the Austrian State Treaty was finalized. A political rather than a military act at the time of its conclusion, the creation of the alliance served to strengthen the integrity of the Soviet bloc while Moscow was engaged in promoting neutrality elsewhere in Europe in an effort to weaken NATO.

Equally significant was Khrushchev's accommodation in June 1955 with Tito's Yugoslavia, which Stalin had ousted from the Soviet bloc in 1948. Aside from luring Yugoslavia away from the West, the gesture of reconciliation during Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade was a prelude to the reformist policies he was about to inaugurate in the Soviet Union itself. Tito, who had "de-Stalinized" yet preserved his power and even gained popular support, had performed the very feat that Khrushchev himself hoped to accomplish in his own country. His resistance to Tito's claim for a greater role in the Soviet bloc set definite limits to any genuine rapprochement between these strong leaders of the two very unequal countries.

At the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in February 1956, Khrushchev denounced Stalin's legacy far more vehemently than was prudent. His famous secret speech, which remained secret only briefly before the United States government published its smuggled-out text in full, described most of Soviet history as a criminal aberration. Although Khrushchev attributed the faults to Stalin rather than to the system over which he had presided, the criticism had a devastating impact on the morale of the communist establishment and the stability of the Soviet empire. Widely interpreted as a sign of Soviet weakness rather than strength, Khrushchev's revelations of Stalin's crimes encouraged especially the Poles and the Hungarians to challenge their pro-Soviet regimes. While in Poland an explosion was avoided at the last moment thanks to Khrushchev's reluctant acceptance of a nationalist party leadership loyal to Moscow, in Hungary a popular revolution destroyed Communist power. The subsequent Soviet military intervention restored it by installing a new puppet regime, at the cost of burying the "first détente."

Reform and Demilitarization. Although the Hungarians had been crushed by Stalinist methods and the resulting increase in East-West tensions evoked the darkest years of the Cold War, the appearances of a relapse into the past were deceptive. In 1958, Khrushchev, with the help of the army, crushed a conspiracy against him led by Molotov and other members of the Stalinist Old Guard. The powers of the secret police were curbed. While the Soviet people received no rights that could not be taken away again from them, the all-pervasive fear characteristic of the Stalin era was gone. The relaxation of ideological controls engendered great hopes among intellectuals, leading to new creativity in literature and the arts. Khrushchev's ebullient optimism and populist style distinguished him markedly from the grim aloofness of Stalin. His accessibility and folksiness generated affection, though not necessarily respect, among the rank and file of the Soviet people.

Encouraged by the Soviet Union's impressive growth and technological feats, which included especially the 1957 launching of the first artificial satellite, "Sputnik," Khrushchev was a true believer in the superiority of the Soviet system and its ultimate triumph over "capitalism." This belief inspired not only his combativeness – best exemplified by his famous remark, "we shall bury you," during his visit to the United States – but also his disposition to reduce the military dimension of the East-West rivalry. That disposition was not readily apparent in his often-threatening rhetoric and the new emphasis he placed on the development of strategic nuclear forces. Yet the expansion of Soviet nuclear capability was not nearly so vast as he led the world to believe while the Soviet conventional forces – the ones more useable as an instrument of policy – actually decreased. Drastic reductions in the size of the armed forces and cuts in the defense budget strained the relations between Khrushchev and the military, regardless of the debt he owed them for helping him to defeat the conspiracy in 1957.

Berlin, Cuba, and China. Khrushchev tried, at one and the same time, to channel the competition with the West increasingly into areas other than military and to intensify it – partly by expanding its scope, partly by shifting it to the Third World. There the Soviet Union enjoyed a psychological edge over the West, which was handicapped by its association with the former colonial powers. His innovative foreign policy, predicated on the continued successful performance of the Soviet system, rested on precarious foundations, however. Moreover, it had to be defended against those who would have preferred cashing in on the real or presumed weakness of the capitalist world. The advisability of such a course, even at the risk of war, was a major point of disagreement in the evolving Sino-Soviet conflict.

To hamper China's acquisition of nuclear capability, the Soviets withdrew their advisors to its nuclear program, incurring the wrath of Mao Ze Dong. Yet Moscow was being increasingly drawn toward a more aggressive international posture to protect its policies from criticism from the left. In 1958-61, Khrushchev sought a diplomatic victory in Germany by trying to oust the Western powers from West Berlin with threats to terminate their rights of access to the city. When the crisis he created proved counterproductive, generating instability in East Germany which prompted the decision to build the Berlin Wall, Khrushchev resorted to an even bolder challenge by secretly trying to install nuclear missiles aimed at the United States in Cuba. Their discovery in 1962 brought the two superpowers closest to the brink of war – an ironic turn of events for a Soviet statesman who had started from the assumption that he could prevail in the competition with the West by diminishing his reliance on military instruments.

Khrushchev's humiliation when the missiles had to be withdrawn from Cuba under American pressure coincided with the proliferation of other problems. Relations with China, which he handled with a singular lack of sensitivity, deteriorated precipitously, leading to an open break; tiny Albania also defected from the Soviet bloc, while Romania took an increasingly independent line in its foreign policy. Meanwhile, Soviet economic performance declined, and Khrushchev suffered a loss of prestige when his ambitious program to put the "virgin lands" in Siberia and Central Asia to agricultural use proved a costly mistake.

Khrushchev's Downfall. In the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis, Khrushchev seemed to have drawn lessons from his failure. Embattled at home, he went farther than any other Soviet leader before him in laying foundations for a more genuine accommodation with the West. The Soviet Union engaged in substantive arms control negotiations, which quickly produced the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963. In 1964, Khrushchev was apparently preparing a new initiative toward a European settlement during his planned state visit to West Germany, the first such visit by a supreme Soviet leader. Before it could take place, however, he was deposed amidst charges of recklessness and "hare-brained scheming." While such charges were a fair description of some of his earlier policies, notably those that had created the Berlin and Cuban crises, at the time of his overthrow Khrushchev was actually moving from confrontation toward accommodation in foreign policy. In domestic affairs, he continued the course of moderate rather than radical reform, aiming at more decentralization in the management of the economy. That such policies nevertheless triggered the action against him was an indication of the anxiety with which the conservative majority of the Politburo viewed both the prospect of a rapprochement with the West and anything that might impinge on the vested interests of the bureaucracy. The failure of Khrushchev, despite all his faults the rare Soviet leader with a human touch and concern for the common people, was more than a personal tragedy. It was also a tragedy of an obsolescent political system that, increasingly resistant to change, destroyed a man of courage and vision sincerely dedicated to improving it.

The Era of Consolidation (1964–1975)

The new regime, presided over by General Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev and Premier Aleksei Kosygin, did not abruptly reverse the course. Criticizing the style rather than the substance of Khrushchev's policies, the regime neither turned more hostile to the West nor stepped up internal repression. It encouraged, though never implemented, Professor Evsei Liberman's plans for economic reform favoring a limited introduction of market incentives into the centralized planning system. It also tolerated growing diversity in Eastern Europe, highlighted by Romania's semi-autonomous foreign policy and the incipient liberalization in Czechoslovakia.

In the latter part of the 1960s, however, the West's mounting social and economic crisis, aggravated by the American embroilment in the Vietnam War, provided Moscow with incentives for more aggressive, rather than more accommodating, policies. In particular, the Soviet Union tried to cultivate discord within the Western alliance by pursuing the project for a European security conference from which the United States would be excluded. The international situation differed from that during the early Khrushchev years in that both power blocs were now facing growing internal problems; at issue was the question of which one would do better in managing what Pierre Hassner, a French political scientist, aptly labeled their "competitive decadence."

Crises in Czechoslovakia and the Far East. The 1968 crisis in Czechoslovakia highlighted the decline of ideology as an inspiration for the Kremlin's policies. The Czechoslovak reformists sought to revitalize communism by giving it a "human face" and reconciling it with democracy. Their experiment, whatever its chances of success, was not given an opportunity to succeed when Moscow, albeit after considerable hesitation, intervened to stop it by military force. As Brezhnev explained to his Czechoslovak comrades whom he sought to depose, at issue was power rather than the future of communism. His statement was suggestive of the distance that the Soviet leadership had traveled from the ideological commitment of Khrushchev and of the extent to which concern for power pure and simple had come to dominate the conduct of the ruling elite.

On the one hand, Moscow's declining moral authority as the center of international communism gave rise to Eurocommunism which, like the Czechoslovak reformers, sought to reconcile communism with democracy while seeking also independence from Soviet control. On the other hand, the trend accentuated the conflict with China, which under Mao Ze Dong replaced the Soviet Union as the world's revolutionary vanguard. In the year following the intervention in Czechoslovakia, the conflict erupted in the worst military clash between the two communist giants along their disputed border at the Usuri River. Against the background of the still-imperfect "normalization" in Eastern Europe, the crisis in the Far East gave the Soviet leadership a decisive impetus to seek détente with the West.

Détente. For Moscow, détente entailed calculated risks and expectations quite different from those prevalent in the West. As Brezhnev himself stated, it did not preclude but, on the contrary, necessitated more strenuous political and ideological competition between the two systems of values. Presupposing internal consolidation of the Soviet bloc despite its greater opening to the West, détente as the Soviets understood it meant a gradual, but irreversible, shift in the global "correlation of forces" in their favor under the condition of low rather than high tension. The expansion of military power played a key role in the Soviet détente calculations. If Khrushchev had hoped that the presumably irresistible ascendancy of the Soviet system would enable him to reduce his reliance on military force in the competition with the West, his less sanguine successors reversed the calculus by regarding the expansion of their military power as the main precondition of the system's ascendancy. Internally, concentration on military might was to compensate for the shortcomings of Soviet performance in nearly every other field. Internationally, the attainment of strategic parity with the United States was to create a respect for Soviet power that would enable Moscow to both develop its economic strength and better wage its struggle for political supremacy as well.

The Economic Accomplishment. Khrushchev's successors departed from the traditional Soviet insistence on economic self-sufficiency, seeking Western credits and importing Western technology, as well as grain, on a massive scale. Assuming that their détente calculations would work to their advantage, they evidently hoped to gain easier access to Western goods needed to spur Soviet economic growth, without a political price to pay. At least during the first half of the 1970s, Moscow's expectations seemed to be materializing.

The adverse effects of the Arab oil embargo on Western economies contrasted with the apparent economic health of the Soviet Union, the world's largest oil producer and foremost beneficiary of the quadrupled oil prices. Although modest by the standards of the Stalin and early Khrushchev eras, Soviet economic growth at that time allowed for both guns and butter. It not only enabled the regime to sustain the massive expansion of the Soviet military machine on which Moscow's conception of détente hinged, the relative prosperity also made possible improvements in the standard of living that gave Soviet citizens, as well as their counterparts in Eastern Europe, a greater measure of material well-being than before.

The improvement enhanced the stability and cohesion of the Soviet empire. This in turn facilitated the subordination of the Comecon, the Soviet bloc's supreme agency for economic cooperation, to Moscow's needs. In particular, the Soviet Union's East European dependencies were made to supply an increasing share of both the material and the manpower investment required to open up new sources of energy and raw materials in remote parts of Siberia. The East Europeans also shouldered much of the burden of subsidizing the growing number of Soviet clients in the Third World.

The Military Buildup. An expansion of Soviet armed forces, including the construction of a large, modern navy, began almost immediately after Khrushchev's Cuban fiasco, presumably under pressure from his critics. Only during the Brezhnev era, however, did the military buildup assume its particular political significance as the key domestic and international lever. Although the Soviet military never became an independent political force within the power hierarchy, their influence on policy-making increased as the economy and the society at large became more and more militarized. Gone were the days of Khrushchev's cuts of the defense budget and his reduction of armed forces personnel. The most productive sectors of the economy were subordinated to military needs. Regardless of détente, reglmentation of the population in the name of civil defense increased.

By the early 1970s, the Soviet Union was generally believed to have achieved strategic parity with the United States in nuclear armaments, having enjoyed conventional superiority for many years. Moreover, the United States under the Nixon administration was finally prepared to satisfy the Soviet yearning to be treated as an equal, not only in military but also political matters. During the Nixon-Brezhnev summit in May 1972, when the two governments adopted the general principles that were to guide their mutual relations, the United States even endorsed the dubious Soviet claim to "equal security" – as if the sources of Moscow's insecurity were military rather than political and largely independent of anything Washington could do. At the same time, the conclusion of the SALT I arms control treaty codified the military parity of the superpowers by setting limits on the levels of their strategic armaments. It seemed that the priority Moscow had assigned to building up its military strength was finally paying off.

Brezhnev at His Peak. The Nixon-Brezhnev summit of 1972 was the high-water mark of détente; already in 1973, the Soviet-American confrontation during the Yom Kippur War in the Middle East foreshadowed a renewal of tensions between the superpowers. Yet despite signals that détente might not last, the period of consolidation under Brezhnev's rule extended at least until the middle of the decade.

The stability of the Soviet government contrasted with the turmoil that handicapped the policies of the United States at the time. While Nixon became mired in the Watergate scandal and was eventually forced to resign in disgrace, Brezhnev maintained a firm grip on power in the Politburo. He did so less by trying to impose his will upon its other members than by arbitrating skillfully the different interests within the increasingly complex Soviet hierarchy and making full use of the power of patronage.

The nation's relative material prosperity made it easier for the regime to strengthen its control over the society by further curtailing the limited freedoms surviving from the Khrushchev era. The once-turbulent Eastern Europe, so important for the Soviet sense of security, appeared to have calmed down, becoming what a contemporary American observer described "the world's forgotten region" – the optimal condition for Moscow. Even the outcome of the 1971 disturbances in Poland, where a peaceful transition to a new government was accomplished without Soviet intervention, could be interpreted as a sign of the empire's stabilization.

In foreign affairs, gains far outweighed losses. With much self-satisfaction, Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko observed that there was no important issue in the world that could be decided without the Soviet Union anymore. In the Third World, the Soviet Union had suffered some setbacks, most notably the expulsion in 1972 of its advisors from Egypt, the country where it had invested more than anywhere else. Even this humiliation paled in comparison with America's catastrophe in Vietnam. In Europe, the Soviets achieved a long-sought solution of the German question very much on their terms after West Germany had concluded formal treaties acquiescing to the loss of its eastern territories and recognizing the GDR. The treaties prepared the ground for the convening of a European security conference, an old Soviet project aimed at giving Moscow a privileged status as the main arbiter of Europe's security. In 1975, the signing of the conference's Final Act in Helsinki, which the Soviet Union regarded as the substitute for the European peace settlement, was a triumphant occasion for Brezhnev. It marked the peak of his power and prestige, overshadowing the onset of his country's at-first-imperceptible but nevertheless irresistible decline.

The Era of Stagnation

Unfulfilled Expectations. The longer the perspective, the more does the year 1975 stand out in Soviet history as a major watershed between good times and bad. Already the effects of the Helsinki agreements, which Moscow had expected would sanctify the *status quo* and make the consolidation of its hold on Eastern Europe irreversible, produced the opposite results. Invoking the Final Act's human rights provisions, dissidents became more active in different countries of the region and the Soviet Union itself, precipitating new political ferment there. Nor did the growing economic interdependence with the West bring the anticipated benefits. In the Soviet Union, economic growth slowed down and productivity declined. The economic, as well as political, stability of Moscow's East European allies became endangered as they were forced to absorb in a variety of ways the impact of the Western recession. The Soviet Union compounded their problems when, after 1975, it increased substantially the prices it was charging them for its vital deliveries of oil and raw materials.

The turn for the worse was gradual rather than sudden and was not obvious enough to call for immediate action. Nor was the prospect of such an action made any more likely by the rapid deterioration of Brezhnev's physical and mental condition during the second half of the decade. The growing accumulation of Soviet internal problems coincided with, but was not directly related to, the downturn in Soviet-American relations. In foreign affairs the Soviet Union took several important new initiatives – initiatives which in the long run sealed the fate of détente without contributing anything to the solution of the nation's growing domestic malaise.

Arms and Politics. The massive Soviet armament effort, which proceeded while détente flourished, continued as détente was declining. No conclusive explanation of the trend has been offered; however, even without clear evidence of a Soviet design for military superiority, the seemingly irresistible momentum of the Soviet military buildup in the absence of a decision to curtail it was profoundly disturbing. Not only did Moscow expand dramatically its nuclear arsenal; in particular the deployment of its SS-20 intermediate-range missiles targeted on Western Europe was unmatched by anything available to the NATO alliance. The Kremlin also showed a new disposition to use its increasingly available conventional capability for political purposes – by expanding its arms trade diplomacy and by using arms for outright intervention in parts of the world where no vital Soviet interests were at stake.

More than any other single factor, this new Soviet military adventurism dealt a death blow to détente. Unlike its behavior in the first half of the 1970s, Moscow showed a growing readiness to support radical, rather than moderate, regimes in the Third World – South Yemen, Uganda, Libya. It used Cuban proxies to forcibly install client regimes in Angola and Ethiopia. Finally, in 1979 it took the unprecedented step of actually using Soviet forces to subjugate a Third World nation by invading neighboring Afghanistan. Soviet expansionism affected adversely the progress of arms control, precluding especially the ratification of the SALT II agreement by the U.S. Senate.

The Decaying Society. The Soviet Union's evolution into the world's premier military power proceeded amidst growing signs of its internal decay. More than 60 years after the Bolshevik revolution, the regime's commitment to the lofty tenets of communism had become largely empty posturing. For the entrenched and complacent bureaucracy, the Soviet system was above all a vehicle for the perpetuation of its prerogatives, which insulated the privileged from the rest of the society. The special stores where only they could obtain the scarce consumer goods, the special schools where only their children could embark on promising careers, or the special resorts where only they could vacation at subsidized prices were some of the vivid symbols of status in the supposedly classless but in reality highly stratified society. Under the Brezhnev rule, committed to keeping the elite satisfied and secure, the gap between the privileged and underprivileged widened, while bribery, profiteering, and other forms of corruption came to permeate all strata of society.

The improvements in the standard of living during the first half of the Brezhnev era were not enough to instill in the people confidence in the present, much less in the future. Such a loss of confidence seemed indicated in the alarming rise in the consumption of alcohol – already the highest in the world per capita – which sociologists linked with the decline in life expectancy and the rise in infant mortality – both unparalleled in industrial societies. The deterioration of Soviet public health services compounded the problem.

These negative social phenomena were more pronounced among Russians than among other ethnic groups. Moreover, the Russians – along with other inhabitants of the European part of the Soviet Union – suffered declining birth rates, while the opposite was true with the birth rates of the nationalities of Central Asia. Apart from the growing labor shortage and the changing structure of the conscript armed forces, these demographic trends threatened to undermine the numerical preponderance on which privileged status of Russians as the Soviet Union's ruling nationality had been resting. Even though the trends did not create immediately explosive situations, they added to the pervasive social malaise that became the hallmark of Brezhnev's declining years.

The Crisis of the Empire. The crisis came into the open in the key country of the empire – Poland. While the form the crisis took – the rise of an independent labor union challenging the party monopoly of power – was largely determined by indigenous factors, at issue were some of the fundamental features of the system common to both the Soviet Union and its dependencies: bankruptcy of the official ideology, corruption of the ruling class, economic mismanagement aggravated by increased exposure to the West, curbs on the freedom of expression. Significantly, the overwhelming military power the Soviet Union possessed proved irrelevant to the course and outcome of the crisis, which was eventually contained, though not resolved, only because of the willingness of the Polish military to restore order by imposing martial law in 1981. At the same time, the replacement of the ineffective party rule by a military regime in Poland had ominous implications for the management of the Soviet Union's own problems.

The Polish developments highlighted the unpredictability of events in Moscow's increasingly heterogeneous East European empire and the Soviet difficulty of ruling it arbitrarily. They were suggestive of the growing burden of an empire which Stalin had originally acquired as the main safeguard of Soviet security as he understood it, but which had since evolved into a major source of Soviet insecurity. Its political stability necessitated regular Soviet economic subsidies at the very time when Moscow could ill afford them. The strain of overextension was magnified by the cost of its overseas ventures, including the staggering expenditure required to keep afloat the economy of Cuba and to pursue the seemingly endless war in Afghanistan.

Andropov and Chernenko. Need for bold and imaginative action became topical at a time when such action could least be expected from a Kremlin leadership weakened by a crisis of succession. During the last five years of Brezhnev's tenure, his physical infirmity further underlined the regime's tendency to sidetrack decision. The aged Politburo seemed both unable and unwilling to take a long-term view of affairs and act accordingly. Having apparently miscalculated in the expectation of a quick victory in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union since 1979 pursued a more cautious course also in its foreign policy, whose lack of dynamism contrasted with the opposite trend characteristic of the United States under the Reagan administration.

After his death in 1983, Brezhnev was succeeded by Yuri Andropov, the chief of the KGB, the Soviet secret police and intelligence agency. Intelligent and presumably best informed about the realities of the situation, Andropov attempted to overcome the pattern of stagnation by enforcing stricter discipline on the rank and file of the Soviet population. Pursuing a hard line toward the United States, the Soviet government in 1983 broke off the strategic arms control negotiations in Geneva after having failed in its campaign to prevent the deployment of NATO's new intermediate-range missiles in Western Europe. Andropov's illness and eventual death in 1984 frustrated any new initiative by his administration, leaving merely a memory, scarcely justified, of a well-meaning reformer.

The conservative majority of the Politburo secured the succession of Konstantin Chernenko, also aged and ill but, unlike Andropov, seemingly devoid of both skill and ideas. Under his leadership, the prestige of the General Secretariat declined to its lowest level, generating doubts about the future role of the office as the center of effective government. Under such circumstances, the absence of any signs of unrest among the pliant Soviet populace bore testimony to the remarkable stability of the regime, resting more on the all-pervasive bureaucracy than on a strong leader. It augured ill for the ability of the system to respond to change.

The same constraints did not apply in Eastern Europe, where some of the governments were exploring new alternatives precisely at the time of weakness and uncertainty in the Kremlin. Not casting doubt on their loyalty to Moscow, such different regimes as those of East Germany and Hungary were nevertheless raising, indirectly rather than directly, claims for a greater measure of partnership with the hegemonial power instead of mere subordination to it. They were demonstrating a better capacity to address the problems of the Soviet system of government that had been imposed on them than the Soviet Union's own leadership seemed capable of doing.

The Advent of Gorbachev. The political bankruptcy of the Politburo's Old Guard facilitated the rise to power of Mikhail Gorbachev, in his early fifties the youngest member of the ruling group, who became General Secretary after the death of Chernenko in March 1985. For the first time in 30 years, the Soviet leader projected the image of youthful dynamism, competence, and lack of pretense.

Gorbachev proved more adept than any of his predecessors at quickly installing his supporters in key positions and out-maneuvering all those on the highest level who might conceivably oppose him. He reaffirmed party control over the military and took grip of foreign affairs after rewarding the long-time executor of Soviet foreign policy, Andrei Gromyko, with the largely ceremonial post of the President of the Supreme Soviet, the official head of state. In the provincial party apparatus, Gorbachev effected personnel changes on a scale unprecedented since the times of Stalin's purges in the 1930s. Yet, unlike Stalin, he generated an atmosphere of trust rather than of fear.

Despite his impressive debut, however, Gorbachev gave scant indication of what he intended to do with the immense power he concentrated in his hands. His innovations in foreign policy were more apparent than real. He implemented a radical reversal by returning to arms control negotiations with the United States and engendered hopes for a better superpower relationship by holding a summit meeting with President Reagan in 1985. But Gorbachev's initiative seemed ill-suited to produce notable results. He particularly failed to thwart continued American development of the Strategic Defense Initiative, which Moscow abhorred less for its purely military implications than as a program likely to sharpen and make irrevocable the Soviet Union's technological and economic backwardness.

Evidently concerned more with internal than with international priorities, Gorbachev invoked the quasi-reformist legacy of Andropov. He seemed no more willing than his mentor to proceed beyond mere tinkering and streamlining. Blaming faults on people rather than on the system, he inaugurated a vigorous campaign against alcoholism – an idea unlikely to endear him to many Russians. But during his first year in office, Gorbachev failed to produce any clear and inspiring domestic program.

The initial image of Gorbachev as a reluctant reformer proved deceptive during his second year, however. Apparently convinced that economic means alone were not sufficient to bring about the coveted "acceleration," he turned his attention to political reform. *Glasnost* – the policy of greater openness in public life – was calculated to promote trust between the government and the people. A flood of new legislation ensued, laying the foundations of a rule of law that would set clear limits to both arbitrary power and individual freedom. A campaign against corruption proceeded to undermine the very foundations of the system inherited from Brezhnev. There was also evidence of new thinking in foreign policy, the main result of which was progress toward substantive arms control agreements with the the United States. As almost each day brought examples of changes thought inconceivable but a few months earlier, there was no more question about the seriousness of the leadership's commitment to genuine reform; its feasibility, however, remained in doubt.

At the Crossroads of History. By the late 1980s, the Soviet Union had become a nation of immense power whose influence extended further than ever before. Ruled by an oligarchy accountable only to itself, it was one of only two countries possessing the means to destroy humankind. On a more positive side, it is a nation that had advanced from backwardness to industrial modernity rapidly, largely on its own, and against formidable odds. As a result, it eventually enabled its people to live a better life than they had lived at most previous times. Yet, despite all these achievements, the Soviet Union, like its tsarist predecessor, could justifiably be called a "colossus on earthern legs."

In a long-term prospectus, the period of Soviet rule in Russia's experience may well prove something of a historical curiosity. Rooted in the 19th-century Marxist doctrine, as adapted by Lenin amidst a revolution that has long since ceased to inspire, the Soviet system has created toward the end of the 20th century an anachronistic monstrosity in the shape of an empire incapable of organic growth. Having forced Russia to become an industrial nation by extraordinarily cruel and wasteful methods, the regime has failed to generate ways and means adequate to enable the country to prosper once more advanced stages of development have been reached. Moreover, the Soviet accomplishments have been too much dependent on the performance of exceptional individuals – Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev. Such individuals by definition cannot be expected to be available indefinitely to operate a system of government ill-suited to accommodate mediocrity at the highest level.

Future historians are likely to differ less in their description of the Soviet Union in the 1980s as a declining power that has already passed its peak than in their opinions about when exactly the turning point was reached. They will have to account for the fascinating contrast between outward strength, still enabling Moscow to overwhelm other nations, and the inner weakness of a rich country which has even ceased being able to feed itself. They will be likely to quote Richard Loewenthal, the German political scientist who as early as the 1960s discerned what he called an "external expansionism of an internally decaying power." They may assign to the 1986 nuclear disaster at the Ukrainian power station at Chernobyl a similar ominous significance for the future of the Soviet Union as the defeat in the battle of Tsushima in 1904 had for the future of tsarist Russia. For on no other occasion did so many critical weaknesses of the regime, each of them all but insuperable, converge so extensively: its excessive reliance on prestigious attributes of power that failed to give true security; its inability to handle advanced technology, including military technology, in the absence of an adequate infrastructure; its fear of admitting setbacks; its incapacity to forge links of trust between the rulers and the ruled. None of these weaknesses by itself is likely to be recorded as the cause of the regime's eventual demise, but taken together, they are apt to be judged by future historians as the ultimate reason for its inability to adapt itself to changing times.

PART 2

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAYS

PRE-PETRINE RUSSIA

by Andrzej S. Kaminski

One cannot seriously contemplate presenting, in a short essay, an evaluation of the very rich historiography covering eight centuries of pre-Petrine Russian history. A bare list of titles of the published sources, monographs, and articles treating such topics as the origins of Rus', Christianization, or the reign of Ivan the Terrible would take dozens of pages. Presenting the most important debates on even a small number of key events would likewise call for a very extensive article and would not necessarily serve as a useful introduction to the historical literature on this long period.

Hence, I have decided to offer here not a critical historiographic essay, but rather a brief bibliographic survey that may be of use to teachers in locating, as quickly as possible, materials that they might want to use in their coverage of this subject. To this end, all works other than textbooks, general histories, and published sources are listed under sub-sections corresponding to those used in my essay ("Origins of the State," "Problems of the Steppe," etc.) This survey will, it is true, provide a rather slanted perception of the historiography as a whole, since it will appear that the lion's share of the literature is written in English. Naturally, quite the opposite is the case; I have been obliged to omit from this list some of the most brilliant and insightful Russian historians, whose only "fault" lies in the fact that they have not yet been translated into English. Likewise, linguistic considerations have forced me to pass over many important works written in German, Polish, Swedish, and French. To be sure, the situation has improved greatly in the past two decades, thanks both to increased research by scholars in this country and in England and to widespread efforts to translate some of the classic works of medieval Russian historiography. (A bibliographic essay of this kind would have been much more difficult to produce some 20 years ago.)

Before turning to the guide, I will permit myself a few more general observations that, however banal, need to be constantly borne in mind. To begin with, historians never write in a vacuum of timeless objectivity. What is more, the best of them have very often been quite involved with the pressing problems of their day. No matter how scrupulous their use of sources or how careful their conclusions, by their sheer choice of topics they have subtly predetermined the outcome of their research. Obviously, liberal-minded Russian historians have sought, as much as possible, to emphasize the activism of society as embodied in the *veche*; meanwhile, the supporters of autocratic centralism or of a strong state have preferred to search for instances of the beneficial and creative role of the government. There is, however, one bias in Russian historiography (echoed far too often by Anglo-Saxon historians) that is characteristic of the whole field. I am referring to a preoccupation with the role of Moscow as "gatherer of the Russian lands" and shaper of the Russian state. This preoccupation with "manifest destiny" has helped make both Russian and Soviet historiography strikingly imperialistic in their presentation of the history of this multinational, multicultural state. In other words, the basic point of reference is always Muscovy or Russia and its government. Histories of nations and cultures incorporated into the old Russian empire are either neglected or judged in terms of their relationship to the Kremlin.

It is true that Muscovite-style institutions and regulations were slowly imposed or proclaimed dominant over a vast area extending from the Pacific to the Dnieper (and later, Vistula) River, but on most of that enormous territory, even until the present day, local, national, and cultural traditions have been struggling to free themselves from the Muscovite bed of Procrustes.

Even in today's Soviet state, after a long period of Russification, Russian nationals do not amount to even half of the population, but many of the country's other nationalities, with interesting histories and cultures of their own, all too often are neglected by scholars. An examination of their past, unfortunately, is considered by too many historians to be non-essential for the "objective" study of the history of the Russian empire and the Soviet Union. Such an attitude is reinforced by school textbooks and popular literature. Thus, we cannot be surprised that while many know the Russian folk song, "Volga, Volga, mat' rodnaia" (Volga, Volga, mother mine), they often fail to realize that the lands along this classically "Russian" river were and are the home to many other nationalities as well: Bulgars, Khazars, Tatars, and countless other Finnic and Turkic minorities, several of them represented today in autonomous Soviet republics that are the shadowy descendants of once-powerful tribes and states. Likewise, the river that symbolizes Russia's origins, the Dnieper, flows for the largest part through the lands populated by two other peoples, the Belorussians and Ukrainians, the latter characterized, at many points in their history, by a fierce struggle for independent statehood. Often, when using the word "Russia," we forget this other reality and too easily apply the social categories and political patterns that took shape on the banks of the Kliazma and Moskva Rivers to distant borderlands of the future empire.

The temptation to view history in teleological terms, from the perspective of hindsight, is always great. It is reinforced in this case by a Russian historiographic tradition that has often been as centralizing as the state it has sought to depict. However, by surrendering to this temptation, we lose the ability to fully understand the process that has led to our seemingly inevitable vantage point. We also deprive ourselves of the richness and complexity of the past. A reductionist, deterministic approach must ultimately drain history of its essentially human content.

Sources

Arguably, history, with its emphasis on a specific rather than theoretical reality, is more dependent than any other discipline on its source materials. Regrettably, fewer of these raw materials are available in English than the secondary works that are ultimately based upon them. What is available is, not surprisingly, biased in the direction of narrative rather than documentary sources. The survey below only scratches the surface of the kinds of sources on which pre-Petrine historiography is based, noting some of the highlights and some of the most accessible materials in translation.

A rich and not yet fully utilized source of insight into medieval Rus' is its chronicle literature, an interlocking corpus of annalistic writing that begins with the Kievan period and continues to be of significance until the period of Ivan the Terrible. Despite their richness, the chronicles are often a problematic source; like any narrative document, they filter the past through the self-conscious eyes of one or more writers and editors. A whole school of textology, associated particularly with the name of A. A. Shakhmatov, has grown up around study of the chronicles. While most of this interpretive and analytical literature has not been translated, it has left its mark on works that have. By now, some of the major chronicle texts have found their English translators. The best known of these is Samuel Cross and O. P. Sherbowitz, trans., *The Russian Primary Chronical*, Laurentian Text (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy, 1953), which presents the chief redaction of the Kievan period that served as the starting point for most of the major annalistic writing of later periods. The Halych-Volhynian continuation of this work, providing much information on developments in the southern and western lands of Rus' as well as early Lithuania up to the beginning of the 14th century, has been translated in G. Perfecky, trans., *The Galician-Volynian Chronicle: An Annotated Translation* (Munich: Fink, 1973). The vigorous and independent traditions of Novgorodian historical writing are represented by *The Chronicle of Novgorod, 1016-1471* (New York: AMS Press, 1970). Finally, a project is underway to translate the major Muscovite chronicle compilation of the 16th century, *The Nikonian Chronicle*, S. and B. J. Zenkovsky, ed. and trans. (Princeton: The Kingston Press); to date, only the first two of five projected volumes, covering the years up to 1240, have appeared.

Another source of valuable information about the society and culture of medieval Rus' is religious literature. Of particular interest is hagiographic writing, represented, most notably perhaps, by the collection of lives of the monks of Kiev's Caves Monastery (*Pecherskaia Lavra*) and the great compilation of saints' lives drawn up under the direction of Metropolitan Macarius in the 16th century. (The use of hagiography as an historical source, it is worth noting, was the subject of the published doctoral thesis of the classic prerevolutionary Russian historian, Vasilii Kliuchevskii.) In addition, one can mention here a vast homiletic and liturgical literature and a body of canon law of which, not surprisingly, only tiny fragments are available in translation.

While, as in the medieval West, secular literature is vastly outweighed by religious writing, one cannot overlook such important genres as the military epic, whose best known examples are *The Lay of the Host of Igor*, describing a campaign against the Polovtsians in the 12th century, and *Zadonshchina*, an account of the famous victory of Prince Dmitrii Donskoi of Moscow over the Tatar Emir Mamai in 1380. In addition, we should mention the shorter, more author-oriented historical works that came to replace in part the earlier chronicles in the late 16th and 17th centuries. Finally, in the 17th century we begin to see the emergence of an independent *belles-lettres* that also can provide valuable insight into the life of the period.

A brief survey of all of these literary genres can be found in D. S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature from Its Beginnings to 1908* (New York: Vintage, 1958). For a more detailed treatment, see Dmitrij Tschizewskij, *A History of Russian Literature* (The Hague: Mouton, 1960), and especially John Fennell and Anthony Stokes, *Early Russian Literature* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974). The best single-volume collection of translations from all genres continues to be Serge A. Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales* (New York: Dutton, 1963), which offers complete texts of or at least selections from many of the most important literary works. For some translations of works by or about a few leading ecclesiastical figures, see George Fedotov, *A Treasury of Russian Spirituality* (Belmont, MA:

Nordland, 1975). Another major ecclesiastical source, the work of a leading monastic figure of the late 15th century, has been translated by David Goldfrank, *The Monastic Rule of Joseph Volotskii* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian, 1983).

In addition, the following translations of individual texts are worthy of note. They include two of the main sources for the stormy reign of Ivan the Terrible: John Fennell, ed., *The Correspondence Between Prince A. M. Kurbsky and Tsar Ivan IV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), and John Fennell, ed., *Kurbsky's History of Ivan IV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965). The authenticity of the Kurbsky writings, it should be noted, has been challenged in Edward L. Keenan, *The Kurbsky-Grozny Apocrypha* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); while the balance of scholarly opinion would probably not accept Keenan's thesis that these works were actually produced later, in the 17th century, the book provides a rare and interesting look at the kind of textological problems that are central to so much of medieval Russian historiography. Two translated sources relating to Muscovite expansion eastward into Siberia and beyond in the 16th and 17th centuries are *Yermak's Campaign in Siberia* (London: Haklyut Society, 1975) and *The Voyage of Semen Dezhnev in 1648: Bering's Precursor* (London: Haklyut Society, 1981). For the 17th century, one should note the fascinating autobiography of Avvakum, one of the leaders of the religious schism, translated with considerable commentary in *Archpriest Avvakum, The Life, Written by Himself* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1979). Another important source for the period is a kind of handbook on the Muscovite state, written by a Muscovite emigre: Grigorii Karpovich Kotoshikhin, *On Russia in the Reign of Aleksei Mikhailovich*, G. Uroff, trans. and ed. (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1971).

Naturally, only a tiny portion of the documentary sources that provide the most reliable foundation for the historian's work are available in English translation. Three collections that do provide a rich sampling of these kinds of materials (as well as extracts from narrative sources) are: George Vernadsky and Ralph Fischer, eds., *A Source Book for Russian History from the Early Times to 1917*, vol. 1 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972); Richard Hellie, ed., *Readings for Introduction to Russian Civilization*, Muscovite Society (Chicago: Syllabus Division, the College, University of Chicago Press, 1967); and Basil Dmytryshyn, *Medieval Russia: A Sourcebook, 900–1700* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1967).

Most of the major law codes of medieval Rus', an invaluable source of socioeconomic as well as institutional data, are available in translation. A short volume by George Vernadsky, *Medieval Russian Laws* (New York: Hippocrene, 1947), contains, among other things, a text of the *Russkaia pravda*, the great codification of the Kievan period, which served as the basis for legal practice throughout Rus' until the reemergence of more centralized political authority in Moscow and Lithuania in the late 15th century. A translation of the Muscovite codes of the 15th and 16th centuries, the so-called *Sudebniki*, can be found in Horace Dewey, *Muscovite Judicial Texts, 1488-1556*, Michigan Slavic Materials 7 (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1966). As for the last great legal monument of pre-Petrine Russia, the *Ulozhenie* of 1649, excerpts may be found in several of the sourcebooks cited above, notably the Hellie volume. One of the first great juridical complications of the Western lands of Rus', the *First Lithuanian Statute of 1529*, has likewise been translated in Karl von Loewe, ed. and trans., *The Lithuanian Statute of 1529* (Leiden: Brill, 1976). A legal source of a slightly different kind, one that enables the reader to trace the rise of Muscovy from a tiny patrimonial principality to a major political power is Robert Howes, ed., *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967), which covers the period from the early 14th to late 16th centuries. A rare look at translated diplomatic material is provided by the reports of Muscovite embassies to the courts of the kings of Georgia in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, published in W.E.D. Allen, ed., *Russian Embassies to the Georgian Kings*, Haklyut Society Publications, Series 2, vol. 138-139 (London: Haklyut Society, 1969).

An important complement to internal Russian sources, providing observations on many important social phenomena that are simply taken for granted or passed over in silence by local writers, are the numerous accounts of foreign travelers, some of them originally written in English and others available in translation. We mention only a few of the most prominent here. One of the earliest, providing a look at Rus' in the wake of the Mongol conquest, is the account of two Franciscan friars sent by the Pope to the Court of the Khan (see John de Plano Carpini in the Publications of the Haklyut Society, London, Series 2, vol. 4, 1900). Another early account describing two trips made by the Burgundian knight Ghillebert de Lannoy to Novgorod and Lithuania in the early 15th century is translated in part in Petras Klimas, *Ghillebert de Lannoy in Medieval Lithuania* (New York: Lithuanian American Information Center, 1945). Descriptions of Rus' by two Italian visitors to the northern Black Sea coast in the 15th century can be found in *Travels to Tana and Persia*, by Josafa Barbaro and Ambrogio Contarini (New York: Franklin, 1964).

In the 16th century, the number of foreign observers took a quantum leap. Perhaps the single best-known is the memoir of the Holy Roman Imperial ambassador to the court of Vasilii III, Sigismund Herberstein; see, for example, Sigismund Herberstein, *Description of Moscow and Muscovy, 1557* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969) or R.H. Major, trans., *Notes Upon Russia*, 2 vols. (London: 1851-52). Interesting accounts by English merchants and ambassadors in the 16th century are found in Lloyd Berry and Robert Crummey, eds., *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968). Another account from this period, written by a German mercenary who served in the Oprichnina, is Heinrich von Staden, *The Land and Government of Muscovy*, trans. by T. Esper (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967).

A major source for the period of the Time of Troubles is the work of a Dutch traveller, Isaac Maasa, *A Short History of the Beginnings and Origins of the Wars in Moscow...down to the Year 1610*, E. Orchard, trans. and ed. (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1982). An important foreign observer later in the 17th century is the ambassador of the Duke of Holstein, Adam Olearius; see Samuel H. Baron, trans. and ed., *The Travels of Olearius in 17th Century Russia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967). Another is the Syriac clergyman, Paul of Aleppo, whose *Diary of the Travels of Patriarch Macarius of Antioch* (Oxford: 1829) offers a more unusual opportunity to see Muscovy through the eyes of the Orthodox world. An interesting view of the expanding Russian empire from the point of view of Jesuit missionaries in China is included in Joseph Sebes, *The Jesuits and the Sino-Russian Treaty of Nerchinsk* (Rome: 1961).

Surveys, Textbooks, and Collections of Articles

A useful overview of the medieval period can be found in Nicholas Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). Another treatment, providing a considerable amount of detail for a survey, is Michael Florinsky's three-volume *Russia. A History and an Interpretation* (New York: Macmillan, 1964-1968). Longer, more ambitous surveys by some of the masters of Russian historiography are now also available in translation. A translation of the monumental, multi-volume work of Sergei Soloviev, *History of Russia* (Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1976-) is underway; to date, at least seven of the projected 50 volumes have appeared. This massive work, with an almost overwhelming amount of detail, can give the reader a good sense of the flavor of the sources and events with which the historian of the period has to deal.

The multi-volume course of Russian history by Vasilii Kliuchevskii, *A History of Russia*, is also available in an older, rather poorly translated edition, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1960, 5 vols.). However, a good, more recent translation is available of the volume relating to the 17th century, *A Course in Russian History: The Seventeenth Century*, N. Duddington, trans. (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968). Of particular interest to English-language readers are the five volumes on pre-Petrine history written by George Vernadsky, unquestionably the most outstanding Russian emigre historian; see G. Vernadsky and M. Karpovich, *A History of Russia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1948-1969). A slightly different perspective is provided by James Billington's general cultural survey, *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture* (New York: Random House, 1966), which also includes an extensive bibliography. The period 1304-1613 was recently well presented by Robert Crummey, *The Formation of Muscovy, 1304-1613* (London and New York: Longman, 1987).

Also of use are a number of collections of articles by specialists in the field, especially Michael Cherniavsky, ed., *The Structure of Russian History* (New York: Random House, 1970) and Donald Treadgold, ed., *The Development of the USSR* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington, 1964), as well as three other volumes of "readings": Sidney Harcave, *Readings in Russian History*, vol. 1 (New York: Crowell, 1962); Warren Walsh, *Readings in Russian History*, vol. 1 (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1963); and Thomas Riha, *Readings in Russian Civilization*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964). In addition, articles on medieval Rus' may be found in a variety of periodical publications, notably *Slavic Reviews*, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, *Russian History*, and *Oxford Slavonic Papers*. English-language articles in the field may likewise often be found in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, *Cahiers du Monde russe et sovietique*, and *Russia Medievalis*.

Origins of the State and the Kievan Period

The best single volume available on the period, despite its somewhat forced attempt to overemphasize the "democratic" character of the political system during the period, is Vernadsky's *Kievan Rus'* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1948), the second volume in his monumental study. The classic Soviet work on the period, with all that that implies, Boris Grekov's *Kiev Rus'* (Moscow: 1959), is also available in English translation. One of the classic statements of the Normanist position is Vilhelm Thomsen, *The Relations Between Ancient Russia and Scandinavia and the Origins of the Rus-*

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sian State (Oxford: 1877). The question of origins is addressed as well in another volume by Vernadsky, *The Origins of Russia* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1959). A new interpretation of the genesis of the Kievan state is being spelled out in a monumental work by Omeljan Pritsak, *The Origins of Rus'*; unfortunately, only the first volume, devoted to Scandinavian sources other than the sagas, has thus far appeared (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981).

The Problem of the Steppe and the Mongol Conquest

The general problem of the steppe is discussed, albeit in a somewhat popular and broad fashion, in William McNeill, *Europe's Steppe Frontiers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964). A standard study of the Mongol Empire is Bertold Spuler, *History of the Mongols*, based on Eastern and Western accounts of the 13th and 14th centuries (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972). A good, comprehensive account of the problems related to the Mongol conquest and the period following can be found in Vernadsky's third volume, *The Mongols and Russia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953). A more concise and recent study that brings the scholarship up to date is Charles Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde: The Mongol Impact on Medieval Russian History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985). Also of value are John Fennell, *Russia in the Thirteenth Century, 1200-1304* (London and New York: Longman Press, 1980), and J.L. Wieczynski, *The Russian Frontier: The Impact of Borderlands Upon the Course of Early Russian History* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1976).

The Muscovite Autocracy

A particularly large amount of work has been published on the rise and development of Muscovy. The inital stages of this process are covered in John Fennell, *The Emergence of Moscow* (London: Seeker and Warburg, 1968), which deals with the principality's seizure of the initiative in the struggle for hegemony in the old Vladimir-Suzdal land in the 14th century. A more comprehensive overview up to the end of the 15th century is provided by a translation of Alexander Presniakov's important, if somewhat dense, *The Formation of the Great Russian State* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970). The final stages of this process, in the reign of Ivan III, are discussed in greater detail in another book by John Fennell, *Ivan the Great* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961). Also of importance here is Vernadsky's fourth volume, *Russia at the Dawn of the Modern Age*, which covers the reigns of Ivan III and Vasilii III.

The ideological aspects of the emergence of the autocracy in the late 15th and 16th centuries are discussed in Presniakov's short essay, *The Tsardom of Moscow* (Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1978), which attempts to synthesize the social and legal sides of the problem as well. Two seminal articles on important aspects of the problem are Michael Cherniavsky, "Khan or Basileus: An Aspect of Russian Medieval Political Theory," and Ihor Ševčenko, "A Neglected Byzantine Source of Muscovite Political Theory," both reprinted in M. Cherniavsky, ed., *The Structure of Russian History*. For a recent examination of the implications of the conquests of the Tatar Volga Khanates for imperial ideology, see Jaroslaw Pelenski, *Russia and Kazan: Conquest and Imperial Ideology, 1438-1560* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974). For an extremist view, which sees the Muscovite autocracy as the reembodiment of the "hydraulic" empires of antiquity, see Karl Wittfogel, "Russia and the East: A Comparison and Contrast," in Treadgold, *The Development of the USSR*.

The development of autocracy is the subject of the last part (two volumes in one) of George Vernadsky's history, entitled *The Tsardom of Moscow, 1547-1682* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969). The reign of Ivan the Terrible is the subject of two translated Russian studies, one by a prerevolutionary author, the other by a recent Soviet historian whose own conceptual scheme draws in part on that of the former. Both are entitled *Ivan the Terrible*, the earlier of them written by Sergei Platonov (Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1974), the latter by R.G. Skrynnikov (Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1981). Another work on the same theme is Bjarne Nørretranders, *The Shaping of Czardom Under Ivan Groznyi* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1971). Two of Platonov's works on the period following Ivan—*Boris Godunov* (Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1973) and *The Time of Troubles* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1970) are also available in English. Among the more general treatments of the 17th century are Vasilii Kliuchevskii's *Seventeenth Century* volume cited above and the first parts of the somewhat more popular work of Bruce Lincoln, *The Romanovs* (New York: Dial Press, 1981). In a similarly popular vein is Philip Longworth, *Alexis Tsar of All the Russians* (London: Seeker and Warburg, 1984), a biography of the mid-17th century tsar, whose reforming efforts may be seen as precursors in some respects to those of Peter the Great. An account of the short reign of Peter the Great's sister Sophia, on the eve of Peter's majority, is C. Bickford O'Brien, *Russia Under Two Tsars, 1682-1689. The Regency of Sophia Alek-*

seevna (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1952).

The Church and Byzantine Relations

Since the church was far and away the most important conduit for Byzantine influence in Rus', these problems must be treated jointly. The Christianization of Rus' is discussed at length in A.P. Vlasto, *The Entry of the Slavs into Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970). Two important works that intertwine a treatment of ecclesiastical affairs in Rus' with the broader problem of Byzantine relations are Dmitri Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth* (New York: Praeger, 1971), which seeks to outline a zone of influence of Constantinople in Eastern Europe comparable to that of Rome in the West, and John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), which focuses on relations between Moscow, Lithuania, and Constantinople in the 14th century and has much to say about the general role of the metropolitanate of Kiev and the legacy of Byzantium in Rus'. A substantive treatment of Russian Orthodox theology can be found in George Florovsky's *The Ways of Russian Theology* (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1979); see also George Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1944-1966).

The 17th-century schism and its political implications are provocatively analyzed in Michael Cherniavsky, "The Old Believers and the New Religion," *Slavic Review*, vol. 44 (1966), pp. 1-39 (reprinted in Cherniavsky, ed., *The Structure of Russian History*). The later development of the schismatic movement in the early 18th century is treated in Robert Crummey, *The Old Believers and the World of the Anti-Christ: The Vyg Community and the Russian State, 1694-1855* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970). Finally, a discussion of the problem of relations between the Orthodox church in Rus' and Rome is found in Oskar Halecki, *From Florence to Brest, Sacrae Poloniae Millenium*, vol. 5 (Rome: Arden, 1958).

Society

Problems of the landed nobility and the peasantry have generally required a combined treatment, as for example in Jerome Blum, *Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961). The standard work on the problem of enserfment, which also deals extensively with the military service class in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, is Richard Hellie, *Enserfment and Military Change in Muscovy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971). Hellie has recently produced another major study on a different aspect of social bondage, *Slavery in Russia, 1450-1725* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). A study of the major Cossack/peasant upheavals of the 17th century can be found in Paul Avrich, *Russian Rebels, 1600-1800* (New York: Schocken, 1972).

On the *boiar* elite of the late 15th century, see Gustave Alef, "Reflections on the Boyar Duma in the reign of Ivan III," *Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 104 (1967). A major study of the same group in the 17th century is Robert Crummey, *Aristocrats and Servitors: The Boyar Elite in Russia, 1613–1689* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983). An older, but interesting article in the same theme is John Keep, "The Muscovite Elite and the Approach to Pluralism," *Slavic Review*, vol. 48 (1970). A recent study of the growing bureaucratic component of the elite is Borivoj Plavsic, "Seventeenth Century Chancelleries and Their Staffs," William M. Pinter and D.K. Rowney, eds., *Russian Officialdom: The Bureaucratiziation of Russian Society from the 17th to the 20th Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).

The classic work on the urban component of medieval Rus' is Mikhail Tikhomirov, *The Towns of Ancient Rus'* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959). A recent study of the Muscovite merchant class in the 16th and 17th centuries is Paul Bushkovitch, *The Merchants of Moscow, 1580-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). Problems of urban society are also discussed in J. Hittle, *The Service City, State, and Townsmen in Russia, 1600-1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

Multinational Empire

As suggested above, the somewhat spottier coverage of the non-Russian nationalities of the late Russian empire reflects the Moscow-centric character of much of the historiography, English-language as well as Russian. It is characteristic, for example, that there is no good synthetic study of the problem of non-Russian minorities within the Muscovite state. A reflection of new interest in the problem, however, is a very interesting work by L. Tillet, *The Great Friendship* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), which presents Soviet methods of falsification of history of Russian and Soviet relations with conquered nations. See also the collective volume, Taras Hunczak, ed., *Russian Imperialism: From Ivan the Great to the Revolution* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1974).

Relatively well covered are the western lands of Rus', home of the Belorussian, Lithuanian, and Ukrainian peoples. Oskar Halecki's *The Borderlands of Western Civilization* (New York: Wiley, 1952) covers the political history of this region in outline form, with particular attention to the influence of Western culture and institutions here. Another general discussion can be found in the section on "Russia's Western Borderlands" in Treadgold's *The Development of the USSR*. A survey of the society and institutions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania can be found in Oswald Backus, *Motives of West Russian Nobles in Deserting Lithuania for Moscow* (Lawrence, KS: Kansas University Press, 1957). Finally, an English translation is available of *The History of the Ukraine*, by Michael Hrushevsky, the father of modern Ukrainian historiography (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1943).

While there is much material on the Mongol empire and its successor in the Golden Horde in the material discussed in the section on the problem of the steppe, there is much less on the eventual absorption of the peoples of the Volga and steppe into the Muscovite state. One work of interest here is the study of Jaroslaw Pelenski cited above. See also the discussion between Ihor Ševčenko, Edward Keenan, Jaroslaw Pelenski, and Omeljan Pritsak on "Muscovy's Conquest of Kazan," *Slavic Review*, vol. 45 (1967). Also worthy of note is A.S. Donnely, *The Russian Conquest of Bashkiria, 1552-1740* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968).

Among the works dealing specifically with Novgorod, Henryk Birnbaum, *Lord Novgorod the Great: Essays in the History and Culture of a Medieval City-State* (Columbus, OH: Slavica, 1981) seems worthy of attention. Also of interest is J. Raba, "The Fate of the Novgorodian Republic," *Slavic Review*, vol. 45 (1967).

On Russian expansion into Siberia and the east, see George V. Lantzeff and A. Pierce, *Eastward to Empire: Exploration and Conquest on the Russian Open Frontier to 1750* (Montreal: McGill, 1973). The problem of the Cossacks is discussed in McNeill's *Europe's Steppe Frontier*, cited above, and in a popular survey by Philip Longsworth, *The Cossacks* (New York, Chicago, and San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1969). For a more scholarly study of the most important leader of the 17th-century Cossack state, see George Vernadsky, *Bohdan, Hetman of the Ukraine* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1941). Information on the importance of the Ukraine for 17th-century Russia and Poland-Lithuania can be found in an interesting book of Frank Sysyn, *Between Poland and the Ukraine: The Dilemma of Adamkisil, 1600-1653* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1985) and in an inspiring article by L.R. Lewitter, "Poland, The Ukraine and Russia," *Slavonic and East European Review* (December 1948). For additional information on Cossacks and their influence on Russia, see also the above-cited work of Wieczynski, *The Russian Frontier*.

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RUSSIA FROM 1689 TO 1825/55

by Marc Raeff

History, like an oriental carpet, has no seams. It is colorful and multipatterned. As in some of the most beautiful and interesting carpets, the detail overwhelms the broader and repetitive patterns. Yet, in order to make history meaningful and relevant to us, we must discover and analyze the essential configurations that give particular character and tonality to a period. In so doing, we have always to keep in mind that some patterns, tonalities, and features may be carried over from one period into the next, while new elements and figures appear alongside. A period is never monolithic; the nature and rate of change the component elements undergo vary from aspect to aspect, as well as over a period of time.

In Russia, from 1689 to 1825/55 the dominant theme or pattern derived from the country's increasingly closer association with and involvement in Western (including Central) European civilization, politics, and culture. This process of Europeanization (or modernization, if you will) was not only an objective fact we can appreciate and assess in retrospect; it also constituted the major aspect of the Russians' self-perception -- whether seen in positive light by most of the elites or meeting with distrust or outright opposition by the people at large. While it is true that in some respects the process of Europeanization had been initiated in the 17th century (or perhaps even in the 16th), the reign of Peter I (1689-1725) marked the most significant and dramatic turning point, primarily due to the speed and violence with which Peter reoriented the goals and practices of government and redefined the ways of the elites. Because he had little success in transforming basic features of Russian society and popular culture, however, his policies brought new elements of conflict and tension to the social and political fabric of the empire.

During the remainder of the 18th century, the legacy of false starts, innovation, and errors of implementation left by the Tsar Transformer had to be worked out. In this process, new patterns and new problems arose to confront both government and society. When the aspirations of Peter I were finally realized in the second quarter of the 19th century, social, economic, cultural, and political circumstances had changed so much that radical readjustment and the striking out into new directions became not only possible but imperative.

Let us first note those aspects of Russian civilization and political culture that Peter I inherited from the Muscovite past and which his reforming energies neither eliminated nor changed essentially. To begin with, the peasantry was and remained largely a serf one. About one-half belonged to the state (which gave them some degree of autonomy and leeway in managing their own affairs) and one-half to private owners. If a trend can be discerned in the 18th century, it is that the condition of the private serfs deteriorated so that they virtually became the chattel of their owners. On the other hand, at the end of the 18th and throughout the first half of the 19th centuries, some peasant individuals and groups managed to diversify their economic activities and become more mobile, underscoring the moral, economic, and legal unacceptability of serfdom. Europeanization was finally seeping down to the village level. The next great task was to resolve the peasant question by abolishing serfdom without overturning the political or social balance. This was the assignment for the reign of Alexander II.

The economic and sociolegal developments of the Russian peasantry are well described in Jerome Blum's classic *Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961). These monographs dealing with emancipation of the serfs in 1861 also devote their first chapters to an analysis of the nature and last stage of the serf economy: Terence Emmons, *The Russian Landed Gentry and the Peasant Emancipation of 1861* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), and Daniel Field, *The End of Serfdom: Nobility and Bureaucracy in Russia 1855-1861* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976). The survival of serfdom into the middle of the 19th century not only constituted a significant factor in restricting the rate of economic growth, but also resulted in the peculiar features displayed by urban life and progress. The conflict between social classes and economic interests to secure the labor of the peasantry enabled the state to retain full control over society and to perpetuate a juridically static situation that precluded a geographically rational distribution of the population.

The existence of underpopulated frontier areas points to another feature the 18th and early 19th centuries inherited from the past -- the multinational character of the Russian empire. In addition, the empire was constantly expanding, the 18th century witnessing perhaps the greatest acquisition of new territories (including the actual incorporation of large areas in Siberia that until then had only nominally been under Muscovite sovereignty). Most of today's Ukraine came under the effective control of the empire in the last quarter of the 18th century, and its energetic settlement by Russian landowners and peasants soon turned it into the most dynamic economic region of the empire. First steps in learning more about settlement of the Ukraine may be W.E.D. Allen, *The Ukraine: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940) or M. Hrushevsky, *A History of the Ukraine* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1941). The pattern of conquest and settlement was given renewed impetus by the partitions of Poland, in which Russia took a leading part; the annexation of the Crimea; and the incorporation of the Caucasus.

Whatever the benefits, this expansion brought in its wake serious new problems in connection with the relationship and treatment of non-Russian populations of greatly diversified religious, cultural, and ethnic character. This was particularly true of those peoples that had a sophisticated social structure and an old political and cultural tradition (e.g., the Baltic provinces and Finland acquired from Sweden, the lands of the former Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth, and the ancient Caucasian principalities of Georgia, Armenia, Abkhazia).

The *modus vivendi* developed in these areas lasted until the late 19th century; the local elites accepted a degree of Russification in return for the preservation of their economic and social status. In the case of the less developed peoples on the Uralo-Caspian frontier and in the steppes bordering on southern Siberia, imperial expansion and Russian agricultural settlement led to revolts and colonial wars. On the process of imperial expansion and relationship with the minorities, see M. Raeff, "Patterns of Imperial Policy Toward the Nationalities" in Edward Allworth, ed., *Soviet Nationality Problems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971).

Disaffected elements of Russian society – industrial serf labor of the Urals, formerly privileged Cossack hosts on the Don and Ural Rivers, serfs of the Church in the Ural Mountains, and religious dissenters (Old Believers) – took advantage of the fluid situation on the frontier to join (or even to lead) the revolts in a vain effort at preventing imperial regulation of their ways of life. This explains the large scale reached by popular revolts in the Ukraine, the Don and Volga, the Urals, and western Siberia; these revolts plagued the imperial government throughout the 18th century. Most serious and dramatic was the rebellion that took place in 1773-75 under the leadership of Pugachev and extended into Central Russia as well. The suppression of the revolt led to the reorganization of the local administration and stimulated the revival of provincial life that was to provide the foundation of Russia's economic and social progress in the 19th century. A general analytical account of the Pugachev revolt is M. Raeff, "Pugachev's Rebellion," in R. Forster and J.P. Green, eds., *Preconditions of Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970).

Two crucial Muscovite institutions – church and autocracy – maintained their primary role throughout our period. Unlike serfdom and empire, however, they underwent greater formal transformation that, in the long run, affected their very nature. Peter I demoted the church from its original position of coeval of autocracy and made it into an office of the central state administration. Furthermore, the clergy became the salaried employees of the government when Catherine II secularized the properties of monasteries and diocese. The office of the Patriarch was abolished and replaced by a college of clerics whose policies and administrative work was directed and controlled by a lay official (*Ober prokuror*) appointed by the ruler. Still more important, the clergy evolved into a well-nigh separate caste of the population – impoverished and bereft of much of its spiritual and moral authority. Two important monographs on the clergy, both by Gregory L. Freeze, have changed our view and interpretation of the church under the imperial regime: *The Russian Levites: Parish Clergy in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977) and *The Parish Clergy in Nineteenth Century Russia: Crisis, Reform, and Counter-Reform* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983).

As a consequence of these changes, the truly dynamic religious life began to take place outside the framework of the established church institutions. This accounts for the importance and direct contribution made by religious thought to Russian literature and culture in the 19th century. No wonder, too, that the church offered little resistance to the growing secularism and radicalism of the educated elites. In fact, children of the clergy played a dominant role in the development of the professions in the second half of the 19th century. The discontented and constricted offspring of the priesthood also furnished a numerous and particularly active and extremist contingent of potential revolutionaries.

The autocracy remained intact, but the form of its government was transformed by Peter I. In Muscovite times the purpose and role of government had been primarily negative: preservation of the state from foreign attacks, maintenance of law and order, and levying of taxes and services to this end. In line with the notions and goals of the Central European "well ordered police state," Peter I – and his successors – endowed government with a positive mission: to promote the productive society. The central administration endeavored to regulate as many areas of public life as possible in order to foster, promote, and direct the people's economic and cultural creative activity.

Of course, given the technological limitations of the time, the rural population, the far-flung frontiers, and the religious and ethnic minorities–to the extent that they did not overtly resist or interfere with the state's policies–were left to their own devices, preserving a good deal of their traditional ways and autonomy. Similarly, the state preferred to have landlords deal with their own peasants, restrain them, control them, and, if possible, organize them for greater productivity; this was a major cause for the peculiar form and harshness taken by serfdom.

The one thing that all segments of society in the empire felt very distinctly was the greater cost of government and the heavier burden of services exacted by it. Taxes, mainly indirect ones, increased to maintain a much-expanded administration and court, while the obligation to furnish recruits to the army and labor services (the building of St. Petersburg, for example) laid a heavy burden on the people.

Autocracy–that is, the principle and practice that made the ruler the ultimate source of all political and judiciary authority–was preserved intact throughout our period. At no point was there any serious questioning of this principle or any serious effort to circumscribe its practice. Naturally, the effectiveness of individual rulers varied, depending on their personalities, the constellation at court, and the ability of their subordinates to carry on their tasks.

In modernizing the central administration, however, Peter I had left unresolved the question of long-term policy direction and control; he had also neglected to adjust the local administrative apparatus to the demands of the central authorities. Resolving the resulting tensions and inefficiencies became an important aspect of government activity leading to the elaboration, and more or less successful implementation, of a number of plans and reform projects. It would be impossible–and unnecessary–to recount these endeavors here; a rather detailed discussion can be found in M. Raeff, *Plans for Political Reform in Imperial Russia, 1730–1905* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966). Here we will look at only two major aspects. First, more consistent policy planning and supervision was needed to guarantee the proper following through of directives. The various changes in the central government–establishing and reforming such institutions as the Senate, the Supreme Privy Council, the Cabinet of Ministers, and the Council of State and the eventual creation of ministries in 1802 (under one head directly responsible to the tsar)–all failed to resolve the problem. The groupings of the top elite vied for power and influence without allowing any one faction or group to remain dominant for long; this enabled the autocrat to manipulate them to retain full control for himself. While authority (on all levels) remained very personal, the task of administration required greater institutionalization and routinization to break away from individual *ad hoc* decisions. Failure to resolve this basic antinomy was the prime reason for the inability to draft an effective, adequately modern code of law. The task of recording and systematizing all laws in force was not carried out until the reign of Nicholas I.

The second big problem was to coordinate central and local institutions. As the government tried to stimulate and direct the maximization of productivity, it was assuming more new tasks and involving itself in more areas of social life. Western and Central European states had resolved this problem by enlisting the assistance of organized social institutions and corporate bodies. In Russia these were embryonic at best; to have them develop rapidly and independently might become a threat to the autocrat's monopoly of authority. Hence, Peter I did very little along these lines.

Catherine II took the first effective steps to help promote and organize society along well-defined, legally guaranteed estate lines that also gave security of person and property to the non-serf population. Yet she did not dare to allow the estates to organize themselves on a fully autonomous basis, though she did lay the groundwork for the development of a civil society separate from the state. In the course of the first half of the 19th century, the central administration was streamlined and became more professionalized, while civil society in the provinces developed into an elite eager and able to take on an independent political role, as well as to provide leadership and guidance to the peasantry on the path of modernization.

The most visible and most revolutionary innovations of Peter I were the transformation–nay even creation–of the cultural elite. To launch and maintain Russia on the path of Europeanization, Peter transformed the upper class, the service nobility. It is still a moot question to what extent this was a genuine social transformation; Brenda Meehan-Waters's *Autocracy and Aristocracy: The Russian Service Elite of 1730* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983) traces the careers and family connections of the top layer of the Petrine service-class throughout the whole century. There is no question, however, that the elite's outlook, way of life, and public and private behavior underwent a radical transformation. The elites adopted the ways and civility of the Western and Central European nobilities; they also accepted a Western-style education as a basic criterion of belonging. Thus, the service nobility of the empire was in a position to partake fully of the literary, intellectual, and artistic life of Europe and to initiate the elaboration of a modern, Europe-inspired, Russian culture (literature, art, philosophy). This process came to a culmination in the first quarter of the 19th century in the works of A.S. Pushkin, when the contemporary literary Russian language received its final shape and Russia's literary and artistic creations obtained recognition both at home and abroad.

Quite naturally, such a new departure did not occur without friction. There arose the question of continuity in national identity. Did Peter I create a new Russian culture or merely transform it? In either case there was a need to restate the definition of national identity. This entailed what Hans Rogger, in *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), has aptly called the development of a national consciousness. In this process, the very orientation and results of Peter's reign were put in question. Had he been beneficial or harmful to Russia? Was he continuing the work of his predecessors, or, by radically wrenching Russia out of its normal path of historical evolution, did he make for a schism or break in Russian culture? Did he dig the seemingly unpassable gulf between the elite and the people? The debate begun in the second half of the 18th century did not end even by the time our period comes to a close. As a matter of fact, it provided the major stimulation to historic reflection and philosophic speculation throughout the 19th century and even into the 20th.

Once initiated, the process of assimilating Western culture and values could not stop. It became impossible for the government to control what aspects of Europe were brought to Russia and developed further. From mere imitation of what Europe had already achieved, Russia's cultural elite went on to give its own expression and form to Western European spiritual and intellectual values. Among these was the entire *corpus* of the critical philosophies and stances of the Enlightenment. Affirmation of the worth and dignity of the autonomous individual and of his rights and duties was accompanied by ever-louder and more energetic demands for freedom of expression and security of person and opinion. Inevitably—especially in the light of the experiences of the American and French Revolutions—the more active and radical members of the educated elite found themselves in conflict with the autocrat and his apparatus of control and repression. For more information on this subject, see M. Raeff, *Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia in the Eighteenth Century Nobility* (New York: Harcourt, 1966).

Eventually, following the failure of the Decembrist movement and the successful imposition of harsh censorship controls by Nicholas I, the educated elites and the establishment broke; the intelligentsia was born and launched on the path of first criticizing and then advocating the destruction of the imperial system. For a detailed chronicle of the process of "separation" with an idiosyncratic, but challenging, interpretation, see Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *A Parting of Ways: Government and the Educated Public in Russia, 1801-1855* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976). This separation gave modern Russian culture (especially its literature) its peculiar cachet; it also served as the seedbed for the emergence of the revolutionary movements that eventually succeeded in toppling the imperial regime.

Strangely enough, our period has suffered from much historiographical neglect. This is true of Russian—both pre-Soviet and Soviet—and Western historiography. One reason, perhaps, is that the most colorful rulers (Peter I, Catherine II) and the most unbalanced ones (Peter III, Paul I) have generated a library full of sensationalist, unreliable, and prejudice-ridden popular biographies (of which R.K. Massie's successful *Peter the Great* is a recent example). Numerous primary sources have been published since the 19th century, so there is no dearth of documentation, although some significant gaps remain (more particularly for the reigns of Peter I and Elisabeth).

Over the past two decades, the situation has been changing, as important and innovative studies have been published by Western, especially American, historians. A number of detailed monographs provide the English-language reader with novel interpretations and fresh descriptions of many trends and problems (especially in social and intellectual history). Unfortunately, the conclusions of this scholarship have not yet been fully absorbed and integrated into general syntheses of Russian and European history.

In most cases, the focus of these studies is narrowly Russian, with the comparative dimension and the broader European setting receiving rather short shrift. This is a great pity, for the history of Russia in our period cannot be properly understood in isolation from events in Europe (and Asia or America); many trends and developments of Russian social, political, and cultural life are best seen in an all-European perspective. Bringing out these connections in presentation and class discussion is the challenge that faces the teacher.

For a general orientation to the period, teachers might begin with the relevant chapters of the following textbooks: Robert Auty and Dmitri Obolensky, eds., *Companion to Russian Studies, vol. I: An Introduction to Russian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); M.T. Florinsky, *Russia: A History and an Interpretation* (New York: Macmillan, 1954); and H. Seton-Watson, *The Rus-*

sian Empire, 1801-1917 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

A general interpretation of one basic aspect of Russian history from the 17th century to 1917 is provided in M. Raeff, *Understanding Imperial Russia: State and Society in the Old Regime* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984). The diplomatic and broader European context is usually treated in the better general histories of Europe—for example, the relevant volumes and chapters of the *Cambridge History of Modern Europe* or of the so-called Langer series.

Belles lettres—drama, historical novels, fiction, poetry—however, give a stimulating and revealing picture of Russian society and of the problems it encountered in the course of Europeanization; most of the best works are available in translation. The two-volume anthology by Harold B. Segel, *The Literature of Eighteenth Century Russia—A History and Anthology* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1967), not only provides a panorama of the development of 18th-century literature under the impact of its acquaintance with French and German models, but also affords many a glimpse into the mores, educational patterns, social conditions, and moral conflicts in Russian society. Some important texts of representatives of social and political thought are also available in M. Raeff, *Russian Intellectual History: An Anthology* (Atlantic Highland, NJ: The Humanities Press, 1978.)

The epoch 1689-1825/55 may be subdivided into shorter periods, each one dominated by the outlook and orientation of the ruler and his chosen advisors. The reign of Peter I set the pattern for most of the social, political, and cultural transformations of the 18th and early 19th centuries. Unfortunately, the only serious and comprehensive monographic treatment is in German (Reinhard Wittram, *Peter I, Czar und Kaiser: Peter der Grösse in Seiner Zeit*, Gottingen, 1964). However, a reliable English translation of relevant lectures from the classic *Course of Russian History* by Russia's most distinguished historian, V.O. Kliuchevsky, is available. In spite of the fact that it was written almost a century ago, this work remains the most readable, psychologically insightful account of both the tsar and his country: Vasilii Kliuchevsky, *Peter the Great*, L. Archibald, trans. (New York: Russell and Russell, 1961). Selected aspects of the reign and personality from different historiographic perspectives are presented in a volume of the D.C. Heath series *Problems in European Civilization: Peter the Great Changes Russia*, M. Raeff, ed. (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1972). Lively fictionalized frescoes of the period are to be found in the novels of D. S. Merezhkovsky, *Peter and Alexis*; A. Tolstoy, *Peter the First*, and A. S. Pushkin, *The Negro of Peter the Great*.

The period 1725-62 is the stepchild of Russian historiography. The *belles lettres* in Segel's anthology are our only worthwhile source. The emergence among the Westernized educated ruling elite of "dissidents," who eventually were to define themselves as the intelligentsia, has been chronicled and its driving forces analyzed by M. Raeff in *Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia: The Eighteenth Century Nobility* (New York: Harcourt, 1966).

The period 1762-96 coincides with the reign of Catherine II. A reliable, well-documented overview of practically all facets of the policies and conditions of that reign is Isabel de Madariaga's, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981). A collection of articles by several historians dealing with selected aspects of the reign and period complements the Madariaga synthesis: *Catherine the Great: A Profile*, M. Raeff, ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972). The revealing and provocative fictionalized account by Alexander Pushkin of the peasant rebellion led by Pugachev, *The Captain's Daughter*, also points to the psychological and moral dilemmas faced by Russian society under Catherine II.

The period 1796-1825, essentially the reign of Alexander I, has three major foci: First was the government's efforts at reforming the central administration to bring it into greater consonance with the pace of society's modernization. The avatars of this endeavor, and its ambiguous results, are well described and plausibly analyzed in the short and readable study by Allen McConnell, *Tsar Alexander I: Paternalistic Reformer* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1970). The second focus was Russia's involvement in the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, more particularly the French invasion of 1812. There is no better description of what these wars meant to Russia than Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. Those interested in the military and diplomatic events can consult E.V. Tarle's *Napoleon's Invasion of Russia*. The third focus was the dissatisfaction of Russian educated elites with Alexander I's failure to reform rapidly and thoroughly and to give society greater freedom of action. This led to the foundation of secret societies that staged an abortive military revolt in December 1825. The story is recounted—along with excerpts from the basic documents—in M. Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966).

The reign of Nicholas I, 1825-55, was not only a period of oppressive control over all expressions of opinion but also a time of gestation and preparation for the sweeping transformation of Russia's economy, society, and administration in the following reign. The stimulating and revisionist book by W. Bruce Lincoln, *Nicholas I: Emperor and*

Autocrat of All the Russias (London: Allen Land and Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1978), is a full, up-to-date, readable, and balanced treatment of a much-misunderstood reign.

RUSSIAN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY, 1825-1917: A BIBLIOGRAPHIC INTRODUCTION

by Richard Wortman

The study of intellectual history has played a crucial role in the understanding and explanation of the Russian past. Ideas were a major force in Russian political evolution, shaping political attitudes far more than they did here or even in Western Europe. This was partly the result of the political system of autocracy, which precluded open political activity and made thought the only possible realm for politics. Educated Russians sought answers in books – in social doctrines, literature, and philosophy. The weakness of independent social groups in Russia – the absence of a strong, independent aristocracy or bourgeoisie – also encouraged intense absorption with political ideas. Since social classes did not provide a dynamic for political change, intellectuals looked to the perspectives of European thought and experience. When political activity finally became possible in the early 20th century, ideology gave impetus to the revolutionary movement and the formation of political parties. The clash between ideas and the realities of early 20th-century political life is a central theme of the drama of the Russian Revolution.

The importance of ideas in Russian political development has prompted historians to devote considerable attention to Russian intellectual history. The body of literature on the subject is large, and key documents are available in English translation. This does not mean, however, that it is easy to teach. Ideas have played a relatively minor role in our own political development since the 18th century, and American students, especially in the 1980s, find it difficult to believe that people acted on the basis of what they read rather than what they could gain. The content and goals of the ideas are also difficult for American students to grasp, though most of the thought discussed is not inherently complex or profound.

The principal goal in teaching Russian intellectual history, then, should be to convey the frame of mind, the mentality of Russian intellectuals in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It is no accident that "intelligentsia" is a Russian word that describes a social formation and way of thinking that in many respects are unique to the Russian experience. Two articles are useful in describing the mental world of 19th-century Russian intellectuals: Isaiah Berlin's brief introduction to *Russian Intellectual History: An Anthology*, M. Raeff, ed. (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1986) and Martin Malia's "What Is the Intelligentsia?" in *Daedalus*, vol. 89, no. 3.

Many excellent works give general perspectives on Russian intellectual history, though one must be careful to distinguish the author's, sometimes inspired, insights from the subjects discussed. Franco Venturi's *Roots of Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960) is a rich, heavily detailed account of developments up to 1881, with a focus on the evolution of Russian populism. Fedor Dan's *The Origins of Bolshevism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964) is an intellectual history devoted to explaining the inception and nature of Russian Marxism, written by a leading Menshevik. Paul Miliukov's *Russia and Its Crisis* (New York: Collier, 1962) gives a liberal perspective on the development of Russian thought.

Other general works have a more philosophical character. Thomas Masaryk's *Spirit of Russia* (New York: Macmillan, 1919), though dated, still offers valuable discussions of Russian thought from a neo-Kantian viewpoint. For a brilliant neo-Slavophile (Russian soul), existentialist interpretation, one can turn to Nicholas Berdyaev's *The Russian Idea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1948) or his briefer and simpler *The Origin of Russian Communism* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1960). Andrzej Walicki provides a neo-Marxist survey of Russian thought, in the vein of "sociology of knowledge," in his *A History of Russian Thought* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1979). For a treatment of Russian ideas in the context of a specific interpretation of cultural history, see James Billington's *The Icon and the Axe* (New York: Random House, 1970).

The secondary literature on specific periods of Russian intellectual life is also rich and abundant. The approach, in most cases, is biographical, which enables the author to integrate the ideas of the time with the subject's life, often in an entertaining manner. The colorful scene of the intellectual salons of "the first generation of the intelligentsia," the 1830s and 1840s, has been described in numerous excellent studies. To mention only a few, Isaiah Berlin's *Russian Thinkers*, especially the essay "The Remarkable Decade" (New York: Penguin Books, 1974); Martin Malia's, *Alexander Herzen and the Birth of Russian Socialism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961); Herbert Bowman's *Belinsky* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954); E.H. Carr's *Michael Bakunin* and *The Romantic Exiles* (New York: Stokes, 1933). On the Slavophiles there are Nicholas Riasanovsky's *Russia and the West in the Teaching of the Slavophiles* (Magnolia, MA: Peter

Smith, 1952) and Andrzej Walicki's more detailed *The Slavophile Controversy* (Oxford University Press, 1975), in addition to valuable biographies by Peter Christoff and Abbott Gleason.

The early, populist period of the revolutionary movement, always of great interest to students, has produced a large literature. William Woehrlin's *Chernyshevskii* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971) gives a good general sense of populism's chief ideologist. Other useful biographical works are Phillip Pomper's *Peter Lavrov* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), Martin Miller's *Kropotkin* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), and Deborah Hardy's *Peter Tkachev* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1977). Barbara Engel's *Mothers and Daughters: Women of the Intelligentsia in Nineteenth Century Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) characterizes the crucial role women played in the movement. My own *Crisis of Russian Populism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967) deals with the populist writers and thinkers and the moment of defeat and reevaluation of ideals.

Materials on Marxist thinkers are particularly rich and are often the first to attract the students' interest. Dan's *Origins of Bolshevism* is the best general introduction and in the latter sections offers a detailed, though occasionally difficult, analysis of the evolution of Lenin's ideas. Among the excellent biographical studies are Abraham Ascher's *Pavel Axelrod and the Development of Menshevism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), Samuel Baron's *Plekhanov* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1963), Israel Getzler's *Martov* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), and Leopold Haimson's *The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1955). Strangely, we still do not have a serviceable intellectual biography of Lenin, who must be approached on the basis of the above-mentioned works and his own writings. Indeed, I still find the section in Edmund Wilson's *To the Finland Station* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giraux, 1972) to be the best brief introduction to Lenin's thought.

The intellectual history of the early 20th century is especially varied and interesting. New intellectual tendencies broke with the heavily political and social orientation of earlier thought and produced great philosophical and artistic ferment. Mysticism, philosophical idealism, aestheticism, and Nietzscheanism contributed to a great cultural efflorescence that Russian intellectuals still draw upon today. This period, however, has drawn serious scholarly attention only recently and has received fewer general studies. I find Berdyaev's memoir, *Dream and Reality* (New York: Collier, 1962), the best introduction. Other pertinent works are Leonard Shapiro's article on the *Vekhi* group (intellectuals who denounced the intelligentsia's traditions of revolutionary activism), *Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 34, (December 1955); Christopher Read's *Religion, Revolution and the Russian Intelligentsia, 1900-1912* (London: Macmillan, 1979), and Nicholas Zernov's *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the 20th Century* (London: Darnton, 1963). Biographical studies include Richard Pipes' two-volume work on *Peter Struve*, Bernice Rosenthal's *Dmitrii Sergeevich Merezhkovsky and the Silver Age* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975) and Martin Rice's *Valery Briusov and the Rise of Symbolism* (Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1975). The fine arts played an important role in the intellectual life of this period. For this, one may consult Camilla Gray's *The Russian Experiment in Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), Alain Besancon's article, "The Dissidence of Russian Painting, 1860-1922," *The Structure of Russian History*, Michael Cherniavsky, ed. (New York: Random House, 1970); John Bowlt's *The Silver Age: Russian Art of the Early Twentieth Century and the World of Art Group* (Newtonville, MA: Oriental Research Partners, 1982); and Robert William's *Artists in Revolution* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1978).

These secondary works will be of use principally for teachers and for students writing papers. I have found that the most effective means of conveying Russian thought in the classroom is to assign the work of the leading thinkers: to let them speak for themselves. Primary sources in English are easily available; once the teacher provides sufficient historical background, these sources can be interesting for the student to read. We are fortunate to have at our disposal a number of excellent paperback anthologies. Two of these are M. Raeff's *Russian Intellectual History: An Anthology* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1986) and Robert C. Tucker's, *A Lenin Anthology* (New York: Norton, 1975). Many useful documents and introductions can also be found in James Edie et al., *A History of Russian Philosophy* (Independence, MO: International University Press, 1969), which deals with writings of a more speculative nature. The disadvantages of this three-volume collection are its size and its topical organization, which make it difficult to find a single volume to assign to students.

The reading of the principal documents of Russian thought introduces the students to the texts that influenced educated Russians in the 19th century and expressed the way they understood the world. These texts fall into three major categories: (1) discussions of Russia's national identity, (2) prescriptions for political action, and (3) reflections on the philosophical grounds for political action.

The themes are closely intertwined, since it was one's understanding of the nature of Russia that determined the type of political or social system Russia could achieve, and the desirability or possibility of that system had to be rooted in philosophical truths.

The key document on national identity was Peter Chaadaev's "Letter," from which one can perceive the two diverging viewpoints of the Westernizers (Belinskii) and the Slavophiles (Kireevsky, etc.); see the Raeff collection. The most important works for the populist revolutionaries were the writing of Nicholas Chernyshevsky and the literary criticism of his protege, Nicholas Dobroliubov. We can gain a sense of the basic radical conceptions of reality, literature, and social action from Chernyshevsky's literary criticism and the selection from *What Is To Be Done?* provided in the back of the edition of *Notes from Underground* edited by Ralph Matlaw (New York: Dutton, 1960).

Many writings of the leading theorists of the revolutionary movement are also available in translation. There are English translations of works of Bakunin, Lavrov, and Kropotkin, though few have been anthologized. Of the Russian Marxists, only Lenin's writings are easily available, and the instructor must take on the necessary, but often futile, task of showing that Lenin's Marxism was not the only—or even the dominant—Marxist viewpoint before 1917. Yet an understanding of Lenin's application of Marxism to Russia—his views on such issues as the revolutionary party, the two-stage revolution, and the resulting political system—is essential for an understanding of the course of the Russian Revolution and the policies of the early Soviet state. A collection of articles of Leon Trotsky, *The Age of Permanent Revolution* (New York: Dell, 1964), can give the student a different Marxist perspective, which Lenin in part adopted in 1917.

Primary sources on the new movements of the early 20th century are less plentiful, but more have become available recently. *The Silver Age*, edited by Carl and Elenda Proffer (Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1975), has works of literary criticism germane to the intellectual developments of the period, but it is now out of print and may be hard to find. Bernice Rosenthal and Martha Bohachevskii-Chomiak have recently published a collection under the title, *A Revolution of the Spirit: Crisis of Values in Russia, 1890-1918* (Newtonville, MA: Oriental Research Partners, 1982). John Bowlt provides useful documents on the modernist movement in art in his *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde* (New York: Viking, 1976). The works of such philosophers as Vladimir Soloviev—who inspired many of these currents—and Vasilii Rozanov are available in translation. Here, we can get a sense of the new mood from the Blok selections in the Raeff anthology.

The memoir is another important primary source for the study of Russian intellectual history. Most Russian thinkers regarded ideas as something immediately relevant to their personal lives, and many left accounts of their quandaries and search for commitments in memoir form. Alexander Herzen's *My Past and Thoughts* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981) is a literary masterpiece; selections from it can give a wonderful sense of the drama of the intelligentsia in the 1830s and 1840s. Peter Kropotkin's *Memoir of a Revolutionist* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1930) describes vividly how the young count became a revolutionary leader in the 1860s and 1870s. Barbara Engel and Clifford Rosenthal's *Five Sisters: Women Against the Tsar* (New York: Knopf, 1975) provides a selection of memoirs of populist women. Maxim Gorky's *My Universities* (New York: Penguin, 1979) and Trotsky's *My Life* (New York: Pathfinder, 1970) describe the appeal and spread of Marxism at the end of the 19th century. Nicholas Berdyaev's *Dream and Reality* is a philosophical autobiography of a thinker who passed from Marxism through philosophical idealism to existentialism. These are only a few examples of the large corpus of intelligentsia memoirs.

Literature is an indispensable source for studying the development of ideas in Russia. The line between thought and literature was never clear in Russian culture, and literary works often contained major statements of belief that passed into the intelligentsia tradition. Every major writer in the century before 1917 became involved in some way in the intellectual controversies of the time. Indeed, the abundance of relevant works of literature is so enormous that one must be careful to avoid a reading list made up predominantly of novels and stories.

Works by Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Bely may be relevant, depending on the emphasis of the teaching. Turgenev's *Sportman's Sketches* and *Fathers and Sons* are crucial to the understanding of the intellectual life of the pre- and post-reform era. Chernyskevsky's *What Is To Be Done?*, though not a great work, was undoubtedly the most influential novel for the revolutionary intelligentsia. It was a favorite of Lenin's, and the source of the title of his famous tract. Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground* is his conservative answer to *What Is To Be Done?* and together with the selection in the Raeff collection gives a good sense of his view of the world. Tolstoy's writings in the late 1870s and 1880s, *The Confession*, "The Death of Ivan Ilich," and "The Kreutzer Sonata," presented his new Christian religious teaching, which enjoyed great popularity in Russia as well as abroad. The works of Chekhov and Gorky are effective in evoking the personal quandaries and social issues besetting the intelligentsia at the turn of the century. Andrei Bely's prose works, and especially his novel *St. Petersburg* (New York: Grove, 1959), capture the mystical symbolic spirit of the early 20th-century intellectual scene. The best general survey of Russian literature remains Prince Mirsky's *History of Russian Literature* (New York: Random, 1958). (The paperback version lacks the sections on the period after 1905.)

Materials to acquaint students with the intellectual life of prerevolutionary Russia are plentiful. The instructor can use primary sources to show how social and political issues suffused the intelligentsia's world and to acquaint the student with the most important viewpoints and philosophies. The instructor should strive to convey the intellectual seriousness of these thinkers, to emphasize the life-and-death quality of their intellectual quests. Russian intellectuals did not read principally for pleasure. With this understood, the student can begin to connect ideas with political events in Russia and to comprehend the motivations of Russian political leaders, both before and after the Revolution of 1917.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONS OF 1905 AND 1917

by Abraham Ascher

A revolution is so cataclysmic an event that it invariably provokes the most intense, diverse, and bizarre explorations of its causes, evolution, and results. Consciously or subconsciously, every commentator takes sides; each interpretation then necessarily reflects an individual assessment of the final outcome. The task of students who seek to understand the three revolutions in Russia (1905, March 1917, and November 1917) is further complicated by the fact that the ultimate victors, the Bolsheviks, subscribed to a fairly comprehensive doctrine, if not quite a blueprint, of how the revolution was to proceed and how the new society was to be organized. Students of Russian history must therefore examine not only the details of political and social struggles but also the impact of the doctrine, Marxism modified by Lenin, on those struggles. Moreover, because the doctrine originated in the West and inspired the formation of influential political parties, the revolutions were bound to have a powerful resonance beyond the borders of Russia, another factor that helps to explain the interest and passions aroused by those upheavals.

Although the events of 1917 were in many respects linked to those of 1905, for reasons of pedagogical clarity it seems best to discuss the historiography of the two periods of turbulence separately. In any case, the issues are sufficiently distinctive to justify such an approach.

Soviet scholars have been remarkably industrious in exploring the Revolution of 1905. While they have not always been monolithic in their conclusions, they have been guided by the general pronouncements of Lenin, who viewed the first upheaval as the "dress rehearsal" for 1917. Soviet scholars tend to ignore or downplay the role of Russian liberals, in 1904 and during the first nine months of 1905, in stimulating popular opposition to the tsarist regime. They claim, as did Lenin, that although 1905 was a bourgeois-democratic revolution in its social content, in its methods of struggle it was proletarian because the strike was the chief weapon in the endeavors to overthrow the existing order. The working class is said to have constituted the "leading force, the vanguard" of the entire opposition movement. Both by example and through agitation, the striking workers stirred up large numbers of peasants, confirming Lenin's thesis that the revolution in Russia would be effected by the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry rather than with the middle class, whom the Bolshevik leader by 1905 dismissed as weak and politically untrustworthy.

According to this interpretation, Bloody Sunday marked the beginning of the revolution. The highpoint was not the general strike of October, which almost toppled the autocracy and impelled the government to grant a major political concession (the October Manifesto), but rather the armed uprising in December, inspired and led by Bolsheviks. Soviet historians claim that the uprising, though brutally suppressed by the tsarist government, was critical in impressing upon the proletariat the necessity of armed struggle against the old order and in providing the masses with the necessary experience to stage a socialist revolution. Since the early 1930s, when party control over historical scholarship rigidified, many works published in the Soviet Union have ascribed hegemony over the revolutionary process not simply to the proletariat, but to the proletariat under the "guidance of the Bolshevik party." It is no exaggeration to state that Soviet scholars view the history of the Revolution of 1905 as a vehicle for indoctrinating the public in the inevitability of Bolshevism's triumph and the correctness of Bolshevik policies, in 1905 and ever since. In short, the function of the doctrine of proletarian hegemony, to which all Soviet historians writing on the 20th century pay obeisance, is to buttress the Communist party's claim to legitimacy in ruling the Soviet Union.

Aside from a four-volume study of the Revolution of 1905 written in Russian by Mensheviks and published in the years from 1909 to 1914, non-Bolshevik scholars (with the exception of Anweiler and Harcave) have concentrated on specialized monographs rather than on comprehensive accounts. While there are important differences in emphasis, approach, and interpretation among them, they tend to reject most of the conclusions of Soviet scholars. Some place special stress on the liberals' campaigns in 1904 in igniting the political turbulence; for example, see Shmuel Galai's *The Liberation Movement in Russia, 1900-1905* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1973), Terence Emmons' *The Formation of Political Parties and the First National Elections in Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), and Richard E. Pipes' *Strive: Liberal on the Left* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970). Others have explored the role of the industrial workers; here, see Walter Sablinsky's *The Road to Bloody Sunday* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), Victoria E. Bonnell's *Roots of Rebellion: Workers' Politics and Organization in St. Petersburg and Moscow, 1900-1914* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983), and Laura Engelstein's *Mos-*

cow, 1905: Working-Class Organization and Political Conflict (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982). Yet others have examined the reaction of governmental leaders or of the gentry to the disorders of 1905; among the works in this category are Howard D. Mehlinger and John M. Thompson, *Count Witte and the Tsarist Government in the 1905 Revolution* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1972); Theodore H. Von Laue, "Count Witte and the Russian Revolution of 1905," in *American Slavic and East European Review*, vol. 23 (February 1958); and Roberta M. Manning, *The Crisis of the Old Order in Russia: Gentry and Government* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982).

The picture that emerges in the non-Bolshevik studies is that the first revolution was an event of enormous complexity. No one special group dominated the opposition to the autocracy throughout the years from 1904 to 1907, which actually comprise the full span of the upheaval. Moreover, it emerges in these writings that there were several shifts in attitude on political issues among the forces pressing for changes and even among the tsar's advisers most determined to maintain the *status quo*. In sum, the revolution is generally viewed by non-Communist historians not as one phase in a predetermined course of Russian history toward socialism, but rather as an event that opened up several paths for Russia.

The Revolutions of 1917 have generated so much controversy among scholars outside the Soviet Union that it may be best to focus primarily on their interpretations. In any case, many of the histories of 1917 written in the Soviet Union are highly tendentious and repetitious; their more plausible conclusions have found supporters in the West, who often substantiate their conclusions with more intellectual rigor and sophistication.

Writers on 1917 have debated the following broad questions: Was a revolution in Russia avoidable? Was the March revolution a spontaneous affair or can the collapse of the tsarist regime be considered the result of various maneuvers and plots by groups hostile to the old order? Was the Bolshevik success in taking power a consequence of Lenin's remarkable abilities as a leader or the outcome of the Provisional Government's incompetence or, perhaps, even treachery? Did the Bolsheviks stage a *coup d'etat* favored by a relatively small sector of the Russian people or did they lead a revolution supported by vast masses of Russians? Were the Bolsheviks able to consolidate their power because they followed policies favored by the people at large or because they proved to be adept manipulators of the masses?

For several decades after 1917, the dominant view among non-Soviet scholars was that in the years from 1906 to 1914 Russia was well on the way to being transformed into a polity along the Western model. Industrialization proceeded at a rapid pace; working conditions in urban centers improved and the government took steps to ease the burdens on the peasantry; workers increasingly abandoned political extremism for trade union activities. The government, though authoritarian, had discarded some of the most extreme forms of arbitrary rule. While the powers of the legislature established in 1906 were rigidly circumscribed, that body nevertheless evolved into an institution with substantial political influence, so that it cannot be dismissed as a negligible factor in the political arena. It served as a public forum from which policies of the autocracy and cabinet ministers could be criticized, and it played a far from insignificant role in passing legislation generally considered progressive. For example, it enacted a scheme for universal education that proved to be remarkably successful: by the mid-1920s illiteracy would have been eliminated even if no revolution had occurred.

All in all, according to this optimistic view of pre-World War I developments, the deepest conflicts in Russian society were being muted. Serious social and political conflicts persisted, but had the war not broken out, they could have been resolved without violence in the political arena. In time, the *duma's* sphere of activity would have been expanded, and the political system would most probably have evolved along genuinely constitutional lines. Two works that represent this view are Alexander Gershenkron's *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966) and Michael Karpovich's *Imperial Russia, 1801-1917* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1932).

In the 1960s Western scholars began to reexamine this optimistic assessment of the state of affairs in Russia and concluded that the war, far from having created the precondition for revolution, actually caused its postponement by rallying the nation to a defense of the fatherland. The new school of historians contends that in the two years from 1912 to 1914 internal conflicts intensified and deepened. At the same time, a substantial number of increasingly class-conscious workers switched their allegiance from the relatively moderate Mensheviks to the extremist Bolsheviks. In the broader political arena, an unprecedented polarization occurred between the privileged sectors of society and the tsarist regime that, in the last analysis, was related to conflicting conceptions of how the polity should be structured. The conjuncture of political polarization and radicalization of the urban masses made likely a new test of strength between the defenders of the old order and the forces pressing for political change. Leopold H. Haimson argues this contention in his article, "The Problem of Social Stability in Urban Russia, 1905-1917," published in *Slavic Review*, vol. 23, (December 1964) and vol. 24 (March 1965).

Like most debates over the "might have beens" in history, the question of whether the Russian Revolutions of 1917 could have been avoided is interesting, challenging, and important, but cannot be definitely resolved. All that can be expected of historians is that they sift the evidence at hand and reach plausible conclusions.

That is the approach used by William Henry Chamberlin in what is still the most comprehensive and balanced account of 1917, *The Russian Revolution, 1917-1921* (New York: Macmillan, 1935). He concluded that the three years of war, characterized by unexpected military defeats, enormous losses in human lives, and shortages of food and industrial goods, dramatically exposed the incompetence of the tsarist regime and heightened discontent with the government among all sectors of the population. Early in March 1917 masses of people, composed initially of civilians but joined within five days by large numbers of soldiers, decided to take action over grievances they had long endured in silence. The outpouring of tens and eventually hundreds of thousands of people into the streets of Petrograd and their refusal to be cowed by governmental pleas or threats proved to be an avalanche that the autocracy could not withstand. The tsar, stunned and incredulous, abdicated when he realized on the eighth day of the demonstrations that his support in all strata of society had melted away. Although numerous industrial strikes had taken place in January and February of 1917, no one had expected them to culminate in an assault on the autocratic system of rule. In Chamberlin's view, the demonstrations that led to the collapse of the old order were unexpected, leaderless, spontaneous.

Ironically, both the radical left and the radical right have rejected an explanation of so monumental an event that stresses its spontaneous nature. It makes the historical process too prosaic and lacking in purposefulness. Thus, Leon Trotsky, whose three-volume *The History of the Russian Revolution* (New York: Macmillan, 1965) is a stirring account by a participant in the second half of the upheaval, contends that although no Bolshevik leaders of the first rank were in Petrograd early in 1917, the workers who staged the demonstrations had been schooled in the ideology of Bolshevism and had gained revolutionary experience in 1905 under the guidance of Lenin's party. There was nothing spontaneous about their conduct; the workers in the streets of Petrograd were class-conscious activists driven by firmly-held convictions. Not much hard evidence can be marshalled in support of Trotsky's thesis. To be sure, after the strikes and demonstrations had gained momentum, activists from all socialist parties (including about 3,000 Bolsheviks) played a part in organizing the marches, but it was the women of Petrograd and the soldiers of the capital's garrison who constituted the backbone of the anti-government drive. Neither of these two groups was known to be sympathetic to Bolshevik ideas.

On the right, the leading opponent of the "theory of spontaneity" has been George Katkov, a learned historian fervently attached to the monarchical principle and to the Romanov dynasty. In Katkov's view, presented in *Russia 1917: The February Revolution* (New York: Longmans, 1967), the blame for the autocracy's collapse must be placed on the liberals and, even more so, on the machinations of the German government. The liberals, Katkov contends, were motivated by a lust for power; they feared more than anything else that a military victory by Russia would consolidate the autocracy for decades to come. Katkov finds the activities of the domestic critics of the government incomprehensible because the "shortcomings of the tsarist administration...were comparable to the muddles and abuses of wartime administrations in other countries."

Katkov's charge against the German authorities is even more far-reaching. He asserts that German money was a decisive factor in causing the wave of strikes in Russia in 1916 and the labor unrest in February 1917, which evolved into the revolutionary upheaval. If his thesis is correct, it would force an abandonment of the interpretation of the February revolution as an unplanned, unorganized, elemental outburst.

Katkov's thesis is a radical extension of a charge widely made in 1917 and for which there is now a considerable amount of proof, discovered by Mr. Katkov himself: that Lenin's Bolsheviks received substantial sums of money in 1917 from the German Foreign Office, which sought to help the radical Marxists conduct a campaign of propaganda against the Provisional Government in order to cripple its ability to wage war. German money may indeed have benefited the Bolsheviks, whose aims in 1917 temporarily coincided with those of the German government, but there is no evidence that foreign money played a role in causing the strikes in 1916 and early 1917.

Lenin's strategy and tactics in the months from April to November 1917 have also been a source of controversy among historians. For several decades, Western scholars viewed the Lenin of

1917 as a supreme opportunist who formulated his policies to achieve power without much regard to the doctrines of Marxism; see for example, the previously cited work of Chamberlin, Bertram K. Wolfe's *Three Who Made a Revolution: A Biographical History* (New York: Dial Press, 1948), Merle Fainsod's *How Russia Is Ruled* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), and Adam B. Ulam's *The Bolsheviks* (New York: Macmillan, 1965). He urged peasants to seize land not already in their possession, which contradicted his previous stand in favor of its nationalization. He encouraged workers to take control of the factories, which smacked more of anarchism than Marxism. He came out in favor of local control over governmental functions by the Soviets, although his ideal was a highly centralized state (this became abundantly evident subsequently when he was in power). He argued for an immediate end to the war, in keeping with the masses' yearning for a halt to hostilities. Lenin's advocacy of a separate peace with Germany did not conflict with his Marxist outlook, but the crucial point is that all his policies in 1917 were calculated to foster powerful mass movements that were already in progress and that were literally disintegrating the Russian Empire. Such disintegration, Lenin realized, would create the preconditions for the seizure of power by a small, determined group of revolutionary activists.

The Provisional Government, on the other hand, insisted on staying in the war (for a "democratic peace"), not only out of loyalty to the Allies but also out of a conviction that a separate peace with Germany would lead to the domination of Europe by the Central Powers. The Provisional Government also shied away from decisive actions on other crucial issues (land, control over factories, autonomy for the borderlands) because it believed that these matters should be handled by a democratically chosen constituent assembly, the election of which was planned but the date for which was postponed several times. The government therefore lacked a popular mandate; in fact, by the fall of 1917 it was thoroughly isolated, incapable of marshalling support from any significant sector of society. In the words of one historian (Ulam), the Bolsheviks "did not seize power in this year of revolutions. They picked it up." Or, as Lenin put it, the taking of power by the Bolsheviks was as easy as "lifting a feather."

Since the late 1960s, a number of scholars abjuring the study of high politics in favor of social history, have challenged the standard interpretation in such works as Alexander Rabinowitch's *Prelude to Revolution: The Petrograd Bolsheviks and the July 1917 Uprising* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1968) and *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (New York: Norton, 1976); Ronald G. Suny's "Towards a Social History of the October Revolution," *American Historical Review*, vol. 88 (February 1983); Diane Koenker's *Moscow Workers and the 1917 Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981); Donald J. Raleigh's *Revolution on the Volga: 1917 in Saratov* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986); and David Mandel's *The Petrograd Workers and the Fall of the Old Regime: From the February Revolution to the July Days, 1917* (New York: St. Martin, 1983). These social historians reject the view that Lenin triumphed in 1917 because he exploited popular discontents by changing positions on critical issues. They contend that "in large part" his party emerged victorious from the struggle for power because in the words of Rabinowitch, its "chief goals (as the masses and most party members understood them) – transfer of state power to a democratic, exclusively socialist, Soviet government, immediate peace, etc. – corresponded to popular aspirations."

These social historians also reject the notion that because the Bolsheviks in 1917 constituted an authoritarian, conspiratorial party firmly under Lenin's control, they were capable of staging a "well-executed *coup d'etat* without significant mass support." They do not deny Lenin's role as a strong leader who persuaded the party to embark on a revolutionary course, but they consider other factors to have been much more important for the Bolsheviks' ultimate success in overthrowing the Provisional Government: "the relative flexibility of the party" and its "responsiveness to the prevailing mood," which gained the Bolshevik movement "strong popular support."

It is noteworthy that on this last issue the difference between the social historians and the traditional historians hinges on divergent characterizations of Lenin's tactics in 1917. The social historians designate Lenin's maneuvers as "flexibility" and "responsiveness" to the wishes of the masses, whereas the traditional view is that they constituted "manipulation." Thus, Ronald Suny has argued that to the social historians "the victorious Bolsheviks have appeared less like Machiavellian manipulators or willful conspirators and more like alert politicians with an acute sensitivity to popular moods and desires." Rabinowitch in one of his works claimed that it was the "democratic character" of the Bolshevik party that explains, as much as any other factor, its ability to take and hold power in 1917.

That the masses had become disillusioned with the *immobilisme* of the Provisional Government is indisputable. Nor can there be any doubt that vast numbers of Russians wanted an end to the war and favored distribution to the peasantry of lands held by the nobility, government, and church. Whether these sentiments made a substantial number of the Russian people sympathetic to the ultimate goals of the Bolsheviks is another question, however. All that can be said with confidence is that the masses' opposition or indifference to the Provisional Government undermined its ability to rule with any degree of effectiveness. Its collapse was merely a matter of time.

The usefulness of referring to the "democratic character" of the Bolshevik party has also been questioned. To be sure, in 1917 the Leninists did not constitute a monolithic movement. It is hard to imagine how in the turbulence of that year rigid control could have been imposed on the party from above. Yet the party had attracted only a small portion of the population into its ranks and in the only free election ever held in Russia (in November 1917), it received about one-fourth of the votes. One must therefore be cautious in attributing to it the status of the voice of "the people." In any case, a political party will be concerned with democracy only if it contains a sizable number of convinced democrats and if it is led by democrats. It would be exceedingly difficult to demonstrate that this was true of the Bolshevik party. Lenin, who did more than anyone else to shape the philosophy and practice of Bolshevism, was preoccupied from the early 1900s with ideas that were distinctly hostile to the concept of political democracy. He was an avowed Marxist bent on achieving power. This is not to say that he lusted for power for its own sake or that his rule was no different from Stalin's. Lenin undoubtedly believed that by staging a proletarian revolution the Bolsheviks would create a better society in Russia, but political democracy as the term had generally come to be understood by the early 20th century was not part of Lenin's vision.

The subject of the early political development of the Soviet state has been most exhaustively examined by John Keep. In his study of the period from February 1917 to the late spring of 1918, *The Russian Revolution: A Study in Mass Mobilization* (New York: Norton, 1976), Keep sought "to show how and why" in that year and a half there emerged "the twentieth century's most durable dictatorship." Keep is not a historical determinist and readily concedes that during the early period of the Soviet Union leaders might have selected policies that would have prevented the development of a monolithic dictatorship. He also acknowledges that many factors after 1918 contributed to the emergence of totalitarianism in Russia. Still, he argues that the groundwork for the Soviet system of rule was laid during the months he has examined. As he puts it, "there does seem to be a certain logic to the unfolding of events."

The core of Keep's book consists of an exploration of the composition and activities of the principal mass organizations that arose after the collapse of tsarism. His concern is to show how the factory committees, workers' militia, trade unions, and urban as well as rural Soviets fell under Soviet control. Had this not occurred, the Bolsheviks would not have had the necessary mass support to seize or retain power. There was no one pattern that explains the "bolshevization of the masses." To some extent, it was a spontaneous process. People moved to the left because they were appalled by the ineptitude of the Provisional Government and the non-Bolshevik parties and were frightened by the social and economic disintegration of the country. No less important in the process of radicalization were the political skill and ruthlessness of the Bolsheviks, who "alone were schooled in the techniques of organizational manipulation and knew more or less what they wanted to achieve." In one organization after another, the Bolsheviks outmaneuvered their opponents and, where necessary, resorted to physical coercion. Once they had brought the mass organizations into line (by the spring of 1918), the Leninists were in a position to ward off the opposition during the civil war and to create an institutional framework that enabled their party to rule for decades to come.

This review of the literature on the Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 is, of course, not exhaustive. Numerous specialized studies on the collapse of the army, the conduct of individual parties, and the role of political leaders and social groups have also appeared, not to mention the large number of eyewitness accounts, some of which are remarkably vivid and insightful. We should also note the massive work by E.H. Carr, *The Russian Revolution, 1917-1921* (New York: Macmillan, 1951-61). Despite its title, this three-volume work is much less an account of the events and conflicts of 1917 than a history of institutions and decrees, based heavily on Soviet sources. Carr considered it futile to explore the "might have beens" in history. The crucial point for him was that the Bolsheviks won, and his primary concern was therefore to describe their achievements.

Even if all the works published on the Russian revolutions were analyzed in depth, it is doubtful that the brief survey of the historical literature presented in this essay would require extensive revision. To be sure, some studies place greater emphasis on one or another factor or offer fresh details, but few are very far from the major lines of interpretation formulated by scholars by the mid-1970s. Certainly, for anyone who wishes to deepen his/her understanding of the evolution of the Soviet system of rule, familiarity with these major interpretations will serve as a good starting point.

SOVIET RUSSIA'S HISTORY UNDER LENIN AND STALIN, 1921-1953: SOURCES AND ISSUES

by Robert C. Tucker

After the Russian Revolutions of 1917 and the ensuing three years of civil strife, foreign intervention, and the draconian Bolshevik policies labeled "war communism," the country's history under Lenin and Stalin divides into two periods: (1) the relatively stable and prosperous post-revolutionary years, which started with the proclamation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1921, and (2) the long Stalin era, which began with Stalin's rise to supreme leadership after defeating the Left and Right oppositions in 1927-29. The Stalin era divides into three subperiods. First was the "second revolution" or "revolution from above" of 1929-39, which started with the abolition of the NEP, the forcible collectivizing of Russia's 25 million peasant farmsteads, and the war-oriented industrialization drive under the first Five-Year Plan (1928-33) and proceeded to the Great Purge. The Great Purge was signaled by the assassination of the Leningrad party leader Sergei Kirov in December 1934 and raged until 1939, accompanied by many political and cultural changes. The second subperiod of the Stalin era was World War II, which began with the Stalin-Hitler accords of August 1939 and subsequent partition of Eastern Europe by the two dictators. Hitler's armies invaded Russia on June 22, 1941, initiating the Soviet-German or, as it is officially known in Russia, the "Great Patriotic War," in which Russia, with the help of Great Britain and the United States and at a cost of more than 20 million lives, prevailed by May 1945. The final subperiod was the postwar years of Stalin's autocratic rule and the East-West Cold War. Stalin's death on March 5, 1953, abruptly ended his era, but memories of it, along with habits and institutions born of it, live on to this day.

The 1921-53 period is under intense new scrutiny at present; few other eras of Russia's history generate so much controversy. One reason is that important new materials on events of Stalin's time that became known during Khrushchev's succeeding period in power have raised questions about earlier views about the Revolution's historical development and the meaning of what happened in Stalin's time.

History-writing on the 1921-53 period divides into three eras. From the late 1920s to the early 1940s, various individuals, usually on the basis of long Russian experience, produced works of importance, including Louis Fischer's *The Soviets in World Affairs* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960), René Fülop-Miller's *The Mind and Face of Bolshevism: An Examination of Cultural Life in Soviet Russia* (New York: 1928), Nicholas Berdyaev's *The Origins of Russian Communism* (London: 1937), Boris Souvarine's *Stalin: A Critical Survey of Bolshevism* (Salem, NH: Ager, 1939), and such journalistic classics as Eugene Lyons' *Assignment in Utopia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1937), Maurice Hindus' *Red Bread* (New York: 1931) and *Humanity Uprooted* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1929), John Scott's *Behind the Urals* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1942), and William Henry Chamberlin's *Russia's Iron Age* (Salem, NH: Ayers, 1934). To this first era also belong Trotsky's writings in exile after 1929, including *My Life* (New York: Pathfinder, 1930), *The Revolution Betrayed* (New York: Pathfinder, 1937), and *Stalin* (New York: Stein and Day, 1967) that he was completing when Stalin had him murdered in 1940. Also, memoirs by Soviet officials who defected, including W.G. Krivitsky's *In Stalin's Secret Service* (Westport, CT: Hyperion, 1939) and Alexander Barmine's *One Who Survived* (New York: Putnams, 1945).

The second history-writing era came with the rise of academic Soviet studies in the West, America in particular, after World War II. An opener, in 1945, was *The Great Retreat: The Growth and Decline of Communism in Russia* (Salem, NY: Ayers, 1946), by the Russian émigré and Harvard sociologist Nicholas Timasheff, who was influenced by some of Trotsky's above-mentioned work. More characteristic of this era, however, was the partly historical *How Russia Is Ruled* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953), by the Harvard political scientist Merle Fainsod, who later produced *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule* (New York: Vintage, 1958). The latter summarizes the contents of a regional party archive covering the years 1917-37; the archive was taken out of Russia by the German army during World War II and appropriated by the American army in Berlin afterwards.

Other notable works of the second era are *The Origin of the Communist Autocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1955) and *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (New York: Random House, 1959), both by the late dean of British Russian studies Leonard Schapiro; Robert V. Daniels' *Conscience of the Revolution: Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960); John Armstrong's *The Politics of Totalitarianism: The Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1934 to the Present* (New York: Random House, 1961); Frederick C. Barghoorn's *Soviet Russian Nationalism* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1956); *Forced Labor in Soviet Russia* by David Dallin and Boris Nicolaevsky (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1947); Zbigniew Brzezinski's *The Permanent Purge: Politics in Soviet Totalitarianism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956); E.H. Carr's multi-volumed *History of Soviet Russia in the 1920's* including three volumes on *Socialism in One Country* (New York: Macmillan, 1951-64); A.A. Avtorkhanov's *Stalin and the Soviet Communist Party* (New York: Praeger, 1959); Alexander Dallin's *German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945* (London: 1957); and the U.S. State Department's two collections of diplomatic papers, *The Soviet Union 1933-1939* (1952) in the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series and *Nazi-Soviet Relations 1939-1941* (1948), which is based on captured documents. More memoiristic works of this period include Markoosha Fischer's *My Lives in Russia* (New York: 1944); Alexander Orlov's *The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes* (New York: Random House, 1953); F. Beck and W. Godin, *Russian Purge and the Extraction of Confession* (New York: Viking, 1951); Alexander Weissberg's *The Accused* (New York: Schuster, 1951); Joseph Scholmer's *Vorkuta* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1954); and G. Hilger and A. Meyer, *The Incompatible Allies: A Memoir-History of German-Soviet Relations 1918-1941* (New York: Haffner, 1953). An influential historical and biographical study in its time was Isaac Deutscher's *Stalin: A Political Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967). Deutscher's subsequent three-volume biography of Trotsky—*The Prophet Armed*, *The Prophet Unarmed*, and *The Prophet Outcast* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954-63) remains the standard work today on Stalin's great foe. On the Soviet side, various source materials came out in English, including Lenin's *Selected Works* (Moscow: 1946) in two volumes, Stalin's *Problems of Leninism* (Moscow: 1947), and the Stalin period's official *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course* (New York: 1939).

The theory of totalitarianism, fashioned mainly by German émigré scholars in the 1940s, greatly influenced Western interpretive histories in the second era. Soviet Communism in its Stalinist phase and Hitler's German National Socialism were seen as similar species of the genus totalitarianism, a dictatorial and terroristic "total state" novel in the 20th century. Such studies as those by Fainsod and Brzezinski mentioned above viewed the Stalinist totalitarian state as the logical outcome of tendencies inherent in Bolshevism's single-party state founded by Lenin.

On the other hand, Trotsky, while calling Stalin's state totalitarian, denied this historical continuity and contended that the Great Purge, in which the bulk of surviving Lenin-era Communists were victimized, separated Stalinism from Bolshevism by a "river of blood." What most Western historians saw as the Stalinist culmination of Bolshevism in the "second revolution" (which Stalin himself described in 1936 as having created a "socialist" society in the main), Trotsky saw as its betrayal, with counterrevolutionary features clearly in evidence; he attributed the betrayal to a conservative bureaucracy of which Stalin was only a "personification," not a driving force in his own right. Trotsky's interpretation was, however, outside the mainstream of Western historiography. The mainstream position was more in line with official historiography in Stalin's Russia in that, while the latter rejected the label "totalitarian," both treated the events of Stalin's time as the fulfillment of Lenin's Bolshevism. In the Soviet slogan of that time, Stalin was "Lenin today" and the genius/builder of the socialist Russia that Lenin had designed as a goal. For Trotsky the totalitarian state that had come about in Stalin's revolution from above was a monstrous historical aberration from the guidelines of Lenin's Bolshevism and was unsocialist, even anti-socialist, in its bureaucratic mode of rule by a privileged elite and its oppression of the worker-peasant majority. Yet Russia, he thought, remained a "workers' state" in its system of nationalized ownership of the means of production.

The third history-writing era began in the early 1960s and extends to the present. Revelations of the early post-Stalin period, particularly in the "secret speech" on Stalin that Khrushchev gave before the Twentieth Soviet Party Congress in February 1956 (it did not remain secret for long, although it has never been published in Russia), spurred a rethinking in Russian as well as Western minds. "Lenin today" proved on the factual testimony of Khrushchev's speech to have been a sickly self-adulating murderous tyrant. His Great Purge displaced single-party rule and created an absolute autocracy based on his personal control of the secret police. It gravely weakened Russia in the face of oncoming war, in which Stalin repeatedly showed himself a bungler as commander-in-chief; his clearly marked paranoidal tendencies (grandiosity, vindictiveness, conspiracy mania, etc.) brought on the conflict with Tito's independently Communist state in 1948.

A consequence of Khrushchev's exposé and further official testimony in subsequent years was that Russia itself, in part via free-thinking intellectuals and *samizdat* (uncensored writings circulated in typescript), reentered historiography in the no longer terrorized post-Stalin society, in which millions of survivors were released from forced-labor camps and exile, among them Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who would write the history of Russia under Lenin and Stalin as a concentration-camp saga in three volumes, *The Gulag Archipelago* (New York: Harper, 1973-75). Still another free-thinking Russian intellectual's work of importance, in part an interpretive history and in part a body of organized oral-history testimony by survivors of Stalin's terror, was Roy A. Medvedev's *Let History Judge: The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism* (New York: Random, 1971). His subsequent works, included *On Stalin and Stalinism* (New York: Random, 1979), *All Stalin's Men* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1984), and *Nikolai Bukharin* (New York: Norton, 1980); none have yet been published in Russia. For Western students of Russia, these writings had the same interest, as the dissident historian Andrei Amalrik said in his *samizdat* essay *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* (New York: Harper, 1971), "that a fish would have for the ichthyologist if it suddenly began to talk." More such "talk," which made its way West after emerging in *samizdat*, included Eugenia Ginzburg's *Journey into the Whirlwind*, a purge victim's memoir (New York: Harcourt, 1967); Nadezhda Mandelstam's *Hope Against Hope* (New York: Atheneum, 1970); General Petro Grigorenko's *Memoirs* (New York: Norton, 1982); the purge memoirs of foreign survivors, such as Joseph Berger's *Shipwreck of a Generation* (London: Harnill, 1971); and the Stalin-era reminiscences of Khrushchev himself in *Khrushchev Remembers* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971-74), dictated after he was deposed in 1964 and later published abroad.

Furthermore, in Khrushchev's time the censors permitted publication of such historically revelatory works as the writer Ilya Ehrenburg's two-volume *Memoirs* (Cleveland: World, 1963-67) and General A. Gorbatov's *Years Off My Life* (New York: Norton, 1964); the latter contains the purge memoirs of a military victim released to fight for Russia in World War II. In the West, Robert Conquest could hardly have produced his valuable history of Stalin's purges, *The Great Terror* (New York: Collier, 1973), without access to the whole post-Stalin literature of revelation. Nor would the works like Moshe Lewin's *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968) and Alec Nove's *An Economic History of the USSR* (New York: Penguin, 1972) have been possible had not various Soviet historians (among them V.P. Danilov and N.A. Ivnitsky) been allowed under Khrushchev to publish archive-based studies on such subjects as collectivization and its background in the mid to late 1920s.

Controversy has flared up and continued in third-era historical writings. If a main theme of *The Gulag Archipelago* is that Stalin's rule fulfilled Lenin's tenets, *Let History Judge* argues strongly for the opposite view – that Stalinism went against much or most of what Lenin's Bolshevism stood for. Western scholars raised the question that one of them, the economic historian Alec Nove, formulated in an article's title, "Was Stalin Really Necessary?" His answer – not beyond the early 1930s – did not satisfy still others, such as the economic historians James Millar and Holland Hunter, who addressed the further question – was collectivization really necessary? – and found that it was not for the needs of feasible industrialization. That there were realistically possible alternatives to Stalin's policies in the early 1930s, notably the nonrevolutionary, gradualist line of development envisaged by Lenin in his last articles and espoused after his death by Bukharin and his associates on the moderate party Right, was argued by Stephen Cohen in his *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973). In general Western historians are divided in their interpretations of the Lenin-Stalin period as a whole, some tending to come down on the side of continuity of the Revolution, as Sheila Fitzpatrick does in *The Russian Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), and others seeing Stalin's "second revolution" as in fundamentals a negation of Lenin's "first."

The lethal purge that Brzezinski called "permanent," owing to the dynamics of totalitarianism, ended in post-Stalin Russia, whose system ceased to be the terroristic despotism that it became in the 1930s. Consequently, the theory of totalitarianism found diminishing support in Western scholarly minds. But if the "dynamics of totalitarianism" do not explain what happened in the post-Lenin period, what does? One line of attack on this question, which found expression in the present writer's *Soviet Political Mind* (New York: Norton, 1971), was psychological interpretation of Stalin and his need for total domination. Some scholars, such as T.H. Rigby in *Lenin's Government* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979) and Nina Tumarkin in *Lenin Lives! The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), set about reexamining institutions of the Lenin period itself. Others applied themselves to empirical study of institutions of the Stalin period, instanced in Niels Erik Rosenfeldt's *Knowledge and Power: The Role of Stalin's Secret Chancellery in the Soviet System of Government* (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde, 1978). Still other studies, such as Robert Sullivan's *Soviet Politics and the Ukraine* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962) and Lionel Kochan, ed., *The Jews in Soviet Russia Since 1917* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), have gone deeper into the study of one or another minority nation's experience in Soviet history or, as in Lowell Tillett's *The Great Friendship:*

Soviet Historians on the Non-Russian Nationalities (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), have examined the nationality problem in the light of the Stalin period's resurgent Great Russian nationalism.

The waning of the theory of totalitarianism encouraged a search for new ways in Soviet historical studies. Perhaps the most promising has been the approach that sees the early Bolshevik revolutionary movement as a would-be culture-transforming movement of Marxist persuasion, and the society that emerged from the Revolution of 1917-21 as a new form of culture or "political culture" in which Bolshevism's and later Stalinism's innovations coexist and blend with persisting or reviving elements of pre-1917 Russian culture, such as the ruler cult, a state religion (new version in "Marxism-Leninism"), a bureaucratically centralized administration, and imperial expansionism in foreign policy. The cultural approach finds reflection in Sheila Fitzpatrick, ed., *Cultural Revolution in Russia 1928-1931* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1978); Robert C. Tucker, ed., *Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation* (New York: Norton, 1977); and Abbott Gleason, Richard Stites, and Peter Kenez, eds., *Bolshevik Culture: Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985).

A point in favor of the cultural approach (although Solzhenitsyn and some Western historians would disagree) is that some representatives of it see Soviet and especially Stalinist Russia as – in foreign as well as domestic affairs – the successor-state of Imperial Russia. According to the cultural interpretation offered in my contribution to *Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation*, Stalinism was Russian national Bolshevism, an amalgam of Bolshevik revolutionism and Great Russian nationalism. Because of the latter component, certain features of the tsarist past and of tsarist policy were deliberately resurrected in Soviet guise. It should be noted, however, that some scholars in the second history-writing era pioneered the breaking down of the idea of a total cleavage between pre- and post-1917 Russia. Two notable examples are Nicholas Vakar in *The Taproot of Soviet Society* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), a study of the influence of traditional Russian peasant culture on Soviet historical development, and Cyril E. Black, whose edited volume, *The Transformation of Russian Society: Aspects of Social Change Since 1861* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), offered studies in the comparative history of the later tsarist and Soviet periods. Finally, in all three history-writing eras, scholars have studied the history of Soviet artistic culture under Lenin and Stalin. Among recent contributions we may mention Katerina Clark's *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) and S. Frederick Starr's *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union, 1917-1980* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983). Earlier ones include Edward J. Brown's *Russian Literature Since the Revolution* (New York: Macmillan, 1963) and Vera Dunham's *In Stalin's Time: Middle-Class Values in Soviet Fiction* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

The history of Soviet society during and after World War II remains a frontier for research. The military history of the war is, however, treated in some studies, among them Matthew Gallagher's *The Soviet History of World War II* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1963) and Harrison Salisbury's *900 Days* (New York: Avon, 1969), an account of Leningrad under German siege. On the diplomatic history of the war period, a major recent contribution is Vojtech Mastny's *Russia's Road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare, and the Politics of Communism, 1941-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

The history of Soviet foreign policy after Lenin is controversial terrain. Scholars remain of several minds on Stalin's foreign policies in the 1930s, some seeing him working from early on toward the accord with Hitler consumated in August 1939, others seeing him committed to the collective security against fascism until the Munich agreement of 1938 made evident its failure, and still others seeing him keeping his options open as long as possible. Louis Fischer's *Russia's Road From Peace to War: Soviet Foreign Relations 1917-1941* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1969), Jiri Hochman's *The Soviet Union and the Failure of Collective Security (1934-1938)* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), and Jonathan Haslem's *The Soviet Union and the Struggle for Collective Security in Europe, 1933-39* (New York: St. Martin, 1984) address the subject. Its continuing controversiality may be seen in the exchange between Kennan, Dallin, Philip Gillette, Teddy Uldricks, and myself on Stalin's foreign policy of the 1930s in *The Slavic Review* (December 1977).

The great controversy of recent decades on the origins of the post-1945 Cold War has produced such a profusion of scholarly writings that even a selective listing is not feasible here. Perhaps the best course is to begin with George F. Kennan's "X" article on "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" (*Foreign Affairs*, July 1947), from which the controversy took its rise, and then proceed to the retrospective view in chapters 9-19 of his *Memoirs: 1925-1950* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), chapters 1-7 of his *Memoirs: 1950-1963* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), and his book *Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin* (New York: New American Library, 1960).

Despite the enormous literature on the Cold War, the history of Stalin's foreign policy in 1945-53 remains to be written. Marshall Shulman's *Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1963) and William Taubman's *Stalin's American Policy: From Entente to Détente to Cold War* (New York: Norton, 1982) are, however, substantial contributions on this subject. Finally, a question still in dispute is whether Stalin was moderating his foreign policy position in 1951-53, as proposed by Shulman in the volume just cited, or was still relentlessly engaged in the Cold War, as argued in "The Stalin Heritage in Soviet Policy" (*The Soviet Political Mind*, 2nd ed., chapter 4).

To conclude on a self-critical note on behalf of Russian studies as a profession, there is still no adequate, much less definitive, biography of Lenin, although David Shub's brief *Lenin* (New York: 1948) and Louis Fischer's more ambitious *The Life of Lenin* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1964) are of use, and the specialized literature on Lenin and his time is large. Eighty-five years after the rise of Bolshevism and seventy years after its coming to power in the Russian Revolution, there is still something mysterious about Lenin as its leader.

THE SOVIET UNION FROM 1953 TO THE PRESENT

by Vojtech Mastny

The Soviet Union's fundamental conservatism tends to blur the extent and significance of the change that the country has undergone during the period since the death of Stalin. Does what has changed or what has remained the same provide a better clue to the understanding of that period? The answer to the question ultimately depends on value judgment – perhaps the reason for the lack of any comprehensive scholarly study contrasting the post-Stalin era with that immediately preceding. A useful substitute is the collection of essays edited by Stephen F. Cohen, *The Soviet Union Since Stalin* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1980). Nor is there a substantive narrative account of Soviet history since 1953; the best brief one is presented in chapters of Donald W. Treadgold's standard textbook, *Twentieth Century Russia* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981). However, the ample monographic literature bearing on the different aspects of the change enables a student of Soviet affairs to form an intelligent judgment.

The best general introduction to the study of contemporary Russian society is by Wright Miller, *The Russians as a People* (New York: Dutton, 1961). Since its publication, several well-informed and readable books by American journalists who spent several years in the country – Hedrick Smith, Robert Kaiser, David Shipler – offer good, though necessarily impressionistic, portrayals of the increasingly complex Soviet society as it has evolved during the quarter of a century since Stalin's death. They all combine warm sympathy for the Russian people with a critical perception of the rigidities of the Soviet system. These works are Smith's *The Russians* (New York: Quadrangle/New York Times Book, 1976), Kaiser's *Russia: The People and the Power* (New York: Atheneum, 1976), and Shipler's *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams* (New York: New York Times Book, 1983).

Politics is what distinguishes the Soviet Union most profoundly from the rest of the world. Although a few political scientists profess that Communism does not substantially distinguish it from other societies at comparable stages of development, most scholars strive to grasp the difference. Chalmers Johnson, ed., *Change in Communist Systems* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1970) deals with the distinctiveness of post-Stalin Communist regimes in general; John S. Reshetar, *The Soviet Polity* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1978), focuses specifically on the Soviet regime. Merle Fainsod and Jerry Hough's *How the Soviet Union Is Governed* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979) is an interesting though controversial experiment in rewriting an earlier, classical study of the Stalinist system of government from a post-Stalinist perspective, positing a substantial degree of pluralism in Soviet politics. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths, in *Interest Groups in Soviet Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), stress the growing importance of such groups since the end of the one-man dictatorship. More up-to-date is *The Dynamics of Soviet Politics*, Paul Cocks, ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976).

Foreign policy since 1953 is the one area of Soviet development where historical studies are the most readily available. Foremost among those covering nearly the entire period is the last third of Adam Ulam's *Expansion and Coexistence* (New York: Praeger, 1974), a perceptive history rich in interpretation, though limited in documentation. Ulam sees the successive Soviet leaders striving for more power and influence abroad, yet advancing less because of their strength than because of their ability to take advantage of the mistakes and weaknesses of their adversaries. Ulam's chronological sequence is called *Dangerous Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983). Thomas W. Wolfe's *Soviet Power in Europe, 1946-1970* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970) stresses the military aspects of Soviet policy in the region that remains crucial to security as Moscow understands it. An excellent, wide-ranging introduction to the study of post-Stalin Soviet foreign policy, drawing on selections from leading authors, is *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Erik P. Hoffman and Frederic Fleron, eds. (New York: Aldine, 1980).

In view of the highly centralized nature of the Soviet system, the transition from one-man tyranny to oligarchy has been the single most important political issue since Stalin's death. It has been analyzed by Seweryn Bialer in *Stalin's Successors* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980) and in two older studies by Myron Rush, *How Communist States Change Their Rulers* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974) and Michel Tatu, *Power in the Kremlin* (New York: Viking, 1968). The latter, by a French journalist with long Moscow experience, is a classic of sophisticated "Kremlinology" – an unjustly disparaged method of making deductions from seemingly trivial, but frequently portentous, changes in Soviet protocol and symbolism. *Power and Policy in the USSR* by Robert Conquest (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), another skilled "Kremlinologist," includes the most illuminating account of the power struggle in the early years after Stalin's death.

The period since 1953 may be subdivided in accordance with the changes in the top leadership—the Khrushchev decade until 1964, the subsequent Brezhnev era, and the post-Brezhnev period (which can be judged to have already begun in the late 1970s when the General Secretary became progressively incapacitated). George Breslauer in *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1982), compares the ruling styles of the two dominant Soviet statesmen of recent times. Of the two, Khrushchev appears the more complex and colorful, thanks also to his having left to posterity two books of memoirs—*Khrushchev Remembers* (New York: Bantam, 1971) and *Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974)—a unique and indispensable source for the understanding of the man and the period. The memoirs can be supplemented by the insightful diary of the Yugoslav Ambassador to Moscow, Veljko Mićunović, who was on close terms with Khrushchev; see *The Moscow Diary* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980).

Studies of this atypical Soviet statesman include *Khrushchev: A Career*, by Edward Crankshaw (New York: Viking, 1966) *Khrushchev and the Soviet Leadership*, by Carl Linden (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966); and *Khruschev*, by Roy Medvedev (New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1983), the last author a well-known Soviet dissident. Roger Pethybridge in *A Key to Soviet Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1962), dissects the 1957 attempt by Khrushchev's rivals to unseat him. Contemporaries, impressed by Khrushchev's dynamism and apparent sense of purpose, were prepared to credit him with a design; later assessments tended to agree with his Soviet critics in judging him as something of an irresponsible gambler. More recently, his historical stature has been rising; he appears as a great improviser, well aware of his country's real problems even if unable to solve them.

The main theme of the Khrushchev era is that of reform and its viability. In the perennial struggle between the friends and foes of reform that permeates Russian history, Khrushchev figures prominently as the quintessential reformer. His famous de-Stalinization speech, analyzed by Bertram Wolfe as a partial improvisation, was a great turning point in Soviet history. It helped to precipitate the 1956 crisis in Eastern Europe, which, even if overcome, eventually forced Moscow to rely in its relations with its satellites less on "prescription" (i.e., what they must do), and more on "proscription" (i.e., what they must not do). On the Soviet relations with Eastern Europe during this first period of upheaval, the relevant chapters of Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), remain useful.

On different aspects of attempted Soviet reforms, particularly in the early 1960s, there are specialized studies, some of them extending beyond the Khrushchev period. These include *Conflict and Decision-Making in Soviet Russia*, by Sidney Ploss (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965) and *Khrushchev and the Development of Agriculture*, by Martin McCauley (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1976), both on agriculture; Karl Ryavec's *Implementation of Soviet Economic Reforms* (New York: Praeger, 1975), on industrial reform; and Thane Gustafson's *Reform in Soviet Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), on policies concerning land and water management. How the Stalinist terror affected the administration of Soviet justice is shown in *Justice in the USSR: An Intrepretation of Soviet Law* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981) and George Feifer's *Justice in Moscow* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1964). The Khrushchev era was one of great hope and renewed creativity in cultural life, as described in Maurice Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1977).

From the Western point of view, the most striking hallmark of the post-Stalin leadership in the 1950s and early 1960s was its aggressive spirit of dynamism and innovation in foreign policy. As a first introduction to the study of this period, which is in need of a reassessment similar to that previously accorded to the Cold War, David Dallin's *Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1961) remains indispensable. The changing Soviet views of the international environment, implying acceptance of an international order in which capitalism and socialism co-exist side by side, are explained in William Zimmerman's *Soviet Perspectives on International Relations, 1956-1967* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969).

On the transformation of the security doctrine under Khrushchev, there is an authoritative Soviet account by Marshal V.D. Sokolovsky, *Soviet Military Strategy* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1975); a perceptive American analysis is provided by Herbert S. Dinerstein, *War and the Soviet Union* (New York: Praeger, 1976). Two aspects of Soviet military policy under Khrushchev—disarmament and strategic deception—are analyzed in *Khrushchev and the Arms Race*, by Lincoln Bloomfield and others (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1966), and in Myron Rush's and Arnold Horelick's *Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), respectively. The former is more inclined than the latter to credit Khrushchev with a genuine desire to achieve limitations of armaments.

The policy precipitated two major international crises – in Berlin and in Cuba – which are the subject of three methodologically important, but controversial monographs. In comparing both the 1948 and the 1961 Berlin crises, Hannes Adomeit tries to determine the general patterns of what he refers to in the title of his book as *Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behavior* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1982). Unlike Adomeit, Robert Slusser writes of *The Berlin Crisis of 1961* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973) as being determined by a struggle between Khrushchev and his rivals in the Politburo. Finally, in his *Essence of Decision* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), Graham T. Allison attempts to apply to the Soviet leadership his bureaucratic paradigm, according to which policies are the outcome not of perceptions of national interest rationally arrived at, but of a largely spontaneous interplay of the parochial interests of different segments of the bureaucracy.

Khrushchev initiated the expansion of Soviet influence in the Third World that his successors then pursued in different directions. *The Soviet Union and the Developing Nations*, edited by Roger Kanet (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), surveys Soviet involvement in different parts of the world; Robert Legvold's book focuses on *Soviet Policy in West Africa* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), a new area of Soviet penetration in the 1960s. The extent of Moscow's commitment to the Arab cause in the Middle East, where the Soviets invested most of their money and prestige in Egypt, has been a subject of controversy; see Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977). In *Arms for the Arabs* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), Jon Glassman shows the fundamentally opportunistic nature of Soviet policy, aimed at supporting the Arabs enough to exacerbate their conflict with Israel, thus perpetuating their need for Soviet aid, but never enough to become victorious. The memoirs of prominent Egyptian journalist Mohammed Heikal, entitled *The Sphinx and the Commissar* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), provide unique insights into Moscow's decision-making and confirm the strict limitations of its backing of any Third World client.

Among the issues that accounted for Khrushchev's downfall, the opening rift between the Soviet Union and China figured prominently. Even before the rift came into the open, it had been diagnosed in Donald Zagoria's classic study, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-61* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), which examines Communist "esoteric communication," analyzing the evolution of the ideological differences between Moscow and Beijing. Most authors consider the rift irreparable; in particular, William E. Griffith's *The Sino-Soviet Rift* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1964), or Herbert J. Ellison, ed., *The Sino-Soviet Conflict* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1982). Few share Harrison Salisbury's view, explicated in *War Between Russia and China* (New York: Norton, 1969), that it would necessarily result in an open military confrontation.

Historical literature of the Brezhnev period is still very scarce. John Dornberg has written a biographical study, *Brezhnev: The Masks of Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1974). Much more enlightening than his own, stilted *Memoirs* (Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press, 1982) are accounts by some of the statesmen who frequently dealt with him, notably Henry Kissinger's *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979). The memoirs of the high-ranking Soviet defector, former Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, Arkady Shevchenko, are a first-rate historical source, comparable in importance for the Brezhnev years to the Mićunović diary for the Khrushchev years; see *Breaking with Moscow* (New York: Knopf, 1985).

The main themes of the Brezhnev era are the rise and decline of détente and the incipient crisis of the Soviet bloc after a period of temporary consolidation. In the early years of the Brezhnev regime, the Soviet Union succeeded in containing the upheaval in Czechoslovakia. Applying the Allison model to the analysis of Soviet decision-making at that time, Jiri Valenta views the Soviet decision not to intervene reversed within a month as a result of a shift in the precarious consensus within the Politburo; his view is presented in *Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovokia in 1968* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979). Karen Dawisha discusses the intervention within the broader context of Soviet foreign policy in *The Kremlin and the Prague Spring* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984). J.F. Brown's *Relations Between the Soviet Union and Its Eastern European Allies* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1975) describes the subsequent strengthening of the Soviet hold on Eastern Europe as an example of Moscow's successful pursuit of the simultaneous goals of "cohesion" and "viability." In *Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe* (New York: Praeger, 1981), Christopher Jones documents the extent of control that the Soviet Union was able to achieve over the Eastern European military. The normalization of relations with West Germany and its reemergence as Moscow's most important trading partner in the West during the 1970s has been analyzed by Angela Stent in *From Embargo to Ostpolitik* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

A good, compact account of post-Khrushchev Soviet foreign policy in different parts of the world is Robin Edmonds' *Soviet Foreign Policy: The*

Paradox of Superpower (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975). Moscow's pursuit of détente with the United States has produced many studies. Some of these have been sympathetic: Walter C. Clemens, *The USSR and Global Interdependence* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1978); Morton Schwartz, *Soviet Perceptions of the United States* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978); and Alexander George, ed., *Managing U.S.-Soviet Rivalry* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983). Most of these studies are, however, critical. Among the most incisive of these are William E. Griffith, ed., *Soviet Empire: Expansion and Détente* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1976) and John Lenczowski, *Soviet Perceptions of U.S. Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982). The latter is a counterpart of Schwartz's book from a conservative point of view, emphasizing that the interests the members of the Soviet oligarchy had in common – namely, the preservation and expansion of their power – far outweighed any putative differences between "hawks" and "doves." The most detailed is Raymond Garthoff's monumental study of U.S.-Soviet relations at the time of détente, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1985). Harry Gelman traces the relationship between Soviet internal politics and détente's collapse in *The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Détente* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984).

The assessment of the vast expansion of Soviet military power during the period of détente has been particularly controversial. While few authors question the evidence of a military build-up well in excess of any reasonable defense requirements, disagreements persist about its extent, the estimates of which have sometimes been exaggerated by dubious calculations. The interpretation of Moscow's motives for expanding its military might precisely at the time of diminishing international tension have ranged from a presumed design for military superiority in quest of world domination to the thesis that the Soviets were drifting, partly in response to Western defense programs, in a never-ending pursuit of marginal advantage and elusive security.

The best introductions to the ongoing debate are provided in Gerald Segel and John Baylis, eds., *Soviet Strategy* (Montclair, NJ: Allenheld, Osmun, 1981) and David Holloway, *The Soviet Union and the Arms Race* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983). Other important books include Harriet F. Scott and William F. Scott, *The Armed Forces of the USSR* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1981); Stephen S. Kaplan, ed., *Diplomacy of Power* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1981); Richard Pipes and others, *Soviet Strategy in Europe* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1976); and Christopher Bertram, ed., *Prospects of Soviet Power in the 1980s* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1980). The thesis that the Soviets built their military machine as a tool for the better exploitation of whatever favorable opportunities for the expansion of their power and influence may occur tends to be supported by the reasoning of their own spokespersons – for example, Admiral Sergei G. Gorshkov, the architect of the modern Soviet navy and author of a book entitled *The Sea Power of the State* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979).

As the Brezhnev era drew to a close, the internal weaknesses of the Soviet system reemerged on a new level, where satisfactory solutions seemed more difficult than before. The issues began to be addressed in the growing literature of dissent – a phenomenon which, though subject to recurrent repression, became nevertheless a permanent feature of the post-Stalin political scene. Writings by the dissidents represent a wide political spectrum ranging from neo-Marxism (Roy Medvedev) to liberalism (Andrei Sakharov) and religious conservatism (Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn). Among the extensive Western literature about Soviet dissent are Rudolph L. Tökes, ed., *Dissent in the USSR* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975); Frederick C. Barghoorn, *Détente and the Democratic Movement in the USSR* (New York: Free Press, 1976); and – concerning disturbing nationalist and authoritarian opposition trends – Alexander Yanov, *The Russian New Right* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978).

Most Western authors consider the Soviet system outdated and incapable of keeping up with the West without radical reform; they differ about the feasibility of such a reform. The declining growth rates, low productivity, and dependence on the West for advanced technology have been amply documented by Abram Bergson, in *Productivity in the Soviet System* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978); Joseph S. Berliner, in *The Innovation Decision in Soviet Industry* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); and Philip Hanson, in *Trade and Technology in Soviet-Western Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981). Whether the effect of these deficiencies and of the Soviet Union's growing economic interdependence with the rest of the world is making its leaders more or less accommodating remains unclear, however. Technology transfer between East and West – the subject of a book of that title by Eugene Zaleski and Helgard Weinert (Paris: OECD, 1980) and several other books – has been defended as a means of inducing Moscow to accept Western economic concepts and procedures, thus facilitating mutual understanding; alternately, it has been condemned as a hidden subsidy of an implacable enemy. Nor are scholars unanimous about the ability of the Soviet system to spur scientific innovation without substantial aid from the West; the political price, if any, that the Soviet Union may be willing to pay for such aid remains correspondingly vague. Two monographs have examined the crucial linkages relevant to technological growth: Loren Graham's *Science and Philosophy in the Soviet Union* (New York: Knopf, 1972) and Bruce Parrott's *Politics and Technology in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981).

The social problems of the Soviet state, exacerbated in the 1970s, have been studied by Western scholars from incomplete and distorted data made meaningful by skillful extrapolation. Mervyn Matthews' *Class and Society in Soviet Russia* (New York: Walker, 1972) and *Privilege in the Soviet Union* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1978) examine the rampant social inequality in the ostensibly socialist society. Walter Connor's *Deviance in Soviet Society: Crime, Delinquency and Alcoholism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972) focuses on the increasingly conspicuous manifestations of anti-social conduct. A book by Christopher Davis and Murray Feshbach, *Rising Infant Mortality in the USSR* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1980), calls attention to a startling trend unique among industrialized nations. Dorothy Atkinson and others, *Women in Russia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1977), is the best on that weighty subject. The potentially explosive nationality questions in the Russian-dominated multiethnic state are explored in Helène Carrère d'Encausse, *Decline of an Empire* (New York: Harper, 1981).

From 1983 onward, the most topical issues of Soviet development have been analyzed annually in *Soviet/East European Survey*, edited by Vojtech Mastny, with an interpretive introduction by the editor. The publication is based on selections from the extensive research reports prepared regularly by the staff of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Munich and is published by Duke University Press, Durham, NC.

Even before the period of leadership weakness that dates from the late 1970s and became particularly pronounced under General Secretaries Andropov and Chernenko, predictions of an impending internal crisis of the Soviet Union had been made. In 1981, the well-known dissident Andrei Amalrik posed in the title of his book the arresting question, *Will the Soviet Union Survive until 1984?* (New York: Harper, 1971). Although the question was eventually answered in the affirmative, a growing literature has focused on the accumulation of long-term problems that the Soviet system seems structurally incapable of tackling; the effort of the Gorbachev regime to do so succeeded mainly in keeping them very much on the agenda.

Prominent among the analyses of Soviet decline is the essay by Robert C. Tucker, "Swollen State, Spent Society: Stalin's Legacy to Brezhnev's Russia," in *Foreign Affairs* (Winter 1981-82). Robert Wesson, in *The Aging of Communism* (New York: Praeger, 1980) and *The Soviet Union: Looking to the 1980's* (Millwood, NY: Kraus International, 1980), dwells on the unmistakeable signs of decay. A minority of Western experts (Richard V. Burks, Ernst Kux) believe that a severe crisis of the Soviet Union might be imminent; others concede a proliferation of symptoms of such a crisis but refrain from any prediction of timing in regard to its progress. The leading American experts who contributed to the volume, *After Brezhnev*, edited by Robert F. Byrnes (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983), credit the Soviet Union with an almost inexhaustible capacity to muddle through and consequently foresaw no dramatic change in the near future. The course of events under Gorbachev proved the seemingly realistic prediction wrong.

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